

ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

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Spring 1965. Vol. XXV. Number 3/4

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A DISTRICT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND ITS DIRECTOR

A PROFILE

G. Bocharova

During a visit to the USSR last summer Cllr. W. W. Begley, FRIBA, a member of Lambeth Borough Council, spent some time in the Moskvoretsky District of Moscow, which is twinned with Lambeth. One of the people he met was the subject of this profile, Georgy Gasilov, the director of education of Moskvoretsky. The director of the factory-school mentioned in our article was also present and explained how children spend up to five hours a week at his school in practical work producing various saleable articles. 'I was given transistors, tiny electrical motors, and electric wall plugs made entirely by children of twelve plus', Mr. Begley says. 'After lunch I was taken on an extensive tour of the flats, shops, schools, etc. being built. The next day I met them again and we went to an international Pioneer camp where Moskvoretsky children were staying. The camp was situated in delightful wooded country, and had every facility for games and study. At the gates we were met by long lines of healthy-looking children, and under their guidance inspected their meteorological station, zoo, workrooms, concert hall, dining hall and dormitories. A general assembly was called, and the children fell in in two ranks, headed by banners and an excellent band. I was invited to speak to them from the saluting stand; afterwards two little girls presented me with a Pioneer bugle, complete with banneret, and a drum. The majority of the children seemed to have cameras, including two cine ones, and a great many photographs were taken, which were developed, enlarged and printed before we left after lunch. I came away with quite a large collection. Mr. Gasilov impressed me very much as an educationist of dedication.'

IN 1934 Georgy Vasilievich Gasilov, then still a very young man, was working in the RSFSR Commissariat of Education. During his work he often, sometimes daily, met both N. K. Krupskaya and A. S. Bubnov (People's Commissar of Education—trs.), especially the latter. One day the People's Commissar took the latest number of a magazine from his desk, opened it at a particular page, and said: 'Have you read this—*Pedagogical Poem** by A. Makarenko? This is real education! Take leave of absence and go to Kharkov to the Dzerzhinsky Commune. See what is going on there for yourself, and then let's have your report. Try to understand the director himself as well as you can. In my opinion he's a remarkable man.'

'And so', relates Gasilov, 'I found myself in the Commune. I visited the shops of their factory, looked around classrooms and dormitories, attended meetings and sessions of the Commanders' Council, and talked at length with Makarenko about his system of education.

'Of course the impression was colossal. You see, I too began teaching at fifteen. I remember that September 1, 1916, like yesterday, when I began to teach the children in a village in the Stravropol Gubernia. After that I worked in other places, saw other schools, large and small, village and town, but I never saw what struck me most about Makarenko's school—a collective. We talked a lot about the school collective then, just as we do now, but what it represented as a living organism I myself have only seen in the Dzerzhinsky Commune. When Makarenko's book *Flags on the Battlements* was published a few years later the reviewers doubted, albeit in a friendly way, the genuineness of the events it described. But there wasn't a word of exaggeration in that book. It told the living truth, but the truth was really like a fairy tale. In the reviewer's place I, too, would not have believed Makarenko; but I was lucky—well before publication of the book I had seen what he described.'

* Translated under the title *The Road to Life*.

‘ Trying to carry out the job given to me the by People’s Commissar as exactly as possible, I spent a lot of time in Makarenko’s office. I wanted to penetrate as deeply as possible into the working secrets of this brilliant master of education. But strangely enough, however much I watched him, I never saw anything special. True, it was unusual that Makarenko’s office was always open to anyone who wanted to come in; but the pupils used this right with so much tact that their presence in the room was scarcely noticeable. On one of the last days of my visit Makarenko himself suggested that I stay to watch what he called “a minor operation”. It was the end of work on a Saturday. One after another communards entered the office and personally, from Makarenko’s hands, received their passes to go into town. The last to come in were five young lads. For some reason Makarenko decided to talk to them in more detail. “ Well, what are you going to do in Kharkov? ” he asked.

‘ The lads told him their plans to go to the cinema, stroll in the park, take a walk in the town, and spend the night with relatives (by this time there were very few homeless boys in the colony). On Sunday there would be football.

“ So ”, said Makarenko, “ you’ve decided to spend the weekend together. Who’s the senior? ”

“ He is.” Four of them pointed to the fifth—a tall, slender youth.

“ Good ”, said Makarenko. “ You may go.”

“ Well ”, Makarenko asked me, “ it’s a bit boring? Wait a bit. The operation’s not finished yet. The finale will be tomorrow evening. You must come.”

‘ At eight o’clock on Sunday evening I sat once again in his office. The communards, whose leave ended at nine o’clock, gradually returned. Some put their passes on the table and left; others sat down on the couch and quietly played a game of chess, or took a book from the cupboard and buried themselves in it. A little before nine o’clock our acquaintances, the quintet, returned.

‘ “ Well, what’s new in town? ” asked Makarenko. The commander reported briefly.

“ And did you give up your seats in the tram? ”

“ We never sat down ”, replied the commander. “ When we got to Kharkov I said ‘ No sitting down? ’ ”

‘ It was already three minutes to nine when Makarenko suddenly said, quietly and kindly:

“ Oh, the wretch! I thought so.”

“ What’s the matter? ” I asked. “ Is someone late? ”

“ There is one ”, he said, more in surprise than annoyance. The lads in the room became agitated. Exactly at nine o’clock we heard a noise from the vestibule downstairs.

“ He’s coming ”, burst with a sigh of relief from the communards. It really was the cause of the general agitation. Red with running and embarrassment, he came into the room and, like all the others, laid his pass on the table.

“ Look at the clock ”, said Makarenko severely.

“ I’m a minute late, Anton Semyonovich.”

‘ I was expecting to hear an apologetic and guilty note in the guilty one’s voice. But nothing of the kind. Quietly and with dignity he awaited the director’s decision. Makarenko took the pass and wrote right across it in large letters with a red pencil *Punishment*.

“ You understand? ”

“ Yes, sir! Punishment.”

‘ The office emptied. We two remained.

“ Well, shall we sum it up? ” asked Makarenko. “ Who do you think taught the lads not to take a seat in a tram? Me? The other teachers? Nothing of the kind. They decided this themselves. to preserve their dignity. This one who’s to be punished—did you notice how he carried himself? Not a hint of

humiliation or supplication. 'Yes, sir'—final. It all looks so simple—but it's just on this that I disagree with the Commissariat. We punish more rigorously for being late than for stealing. The people in the Commissariat won't admit such logic. Their sentimental natures find our severity unacceptable. But it's just in such demands on the individual, demands with no extenuation or mitigation, but at the same time with respect for the person, that show real regard for his dignity and his pride, that the wisdom of the real education lies.'"

Gasilov returned to Moscow a few days later and gave a detailed report of his visit to the People's Commissar. The latter listened very attentively without interrupting his 'messenger'. When Gasilov had finished he said:

'Yes, that's it; that's the way I picture real education. Just like that.'

PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES

THE basic problems confronting those in charge of the Moskvoretsky District of Moscow are the same as everybody's: progress, solid knowledge, discipline—but they are solving them in their own way. Analysing the results of his many years' experience in schools and administration, Gasilov, now the Director of Education of Moskvoretsky District, and his assistants unanimously concluded that there must be a radical change first of all in the leadership of public education itself.

The basic idea of their changes was decentralisation of the running of the schools. Gasilov is convinced that to be successful in the teaching and bringing up of children, schools must be given the utmost possible independence. Local educational authorities, for one reason and another, are not in a position to control the work of the staffs effectively. The schools are many, while the inspectors!—one or two visits and that's that! And some time or another in the future they should be unnecessary if a system of personal and mutual control is organised, and if base schools are made methods centres. Two years ago, on Gasilov's initiative, an Institute of Senior Teachers was set up in Moskvoretsky District. It is still in the experimental stage; Gasilov does not like to hurry when it is a matter of serious and important problems. A senior teacher is the most experienced subject teacher in a local teachers' group. He should be more highly paid. It is his duty to help the other teachers to work well. The senior teacher heads the local methods group for his subject. He watches intently for everything new in education and is responsible for its adoption into practice. He himself gives regular open lessons and demonstrates new, more progressive methods of teaching.

'Wouldn't it be better', I asked Gasilov, 'to give all these functions to the deputy heads of schools? True, the leaderships of teaching would not be so concrete; on the other hand it would not be impersonal, as questions of progress are referred already to the senior teachers as well as to the deputy heads. Won't there be passing of the buck?'

'Such dangers', Gasilov said, 'have already appeared. I treat them very seriously. That's why we don't hurry. But so far everything is going normally, and we constantly emphasise that the chief place for work with a teacher is in the school.'

'The pivot of the reorganisation we are undertaking lies in the work of the head of the school. To improve a backward collective farm or factory we send it an able director. We have to go about it in exactly the same way. Schools with a high rating have become leading schools, thanks to able heads. Most of these are heads who grew up on Makarenko's ideas, which they have absorbed in their very flesh and blood. To be a Makarenko head is not just to know his books. To run a school on Makarenko principles means to build the whole educational process on the system of this outstanding educationist. But Makarenko heads don't fall from heaven. They too have to be educated. We

are doing so to the best of our forces and possibilities. We are making sure that they have a good knowledge of theory, that they are conversant with the experience of their colleagues, have initiative, are daring, and able to take intelligent risks, and are capable of proving the need for such risks.'

Gasilov pays much attention to school management and has made a complete revolution in this field. For years he dreamed of setting up a single unified management and administrative office; and at the beginning of 1964 the new set-up began to work. The former deputy director of education of the district, A. I. Bogomolov, now heads the combined office. Previously each school in the Moskvoretsky District, as elsewhere, had a book-keeper, badly paid, and half-time workers as electricians and fitters. With the wages paid it was very difficult to get skilled workers, so that all kinds of two-job working were introduced, the financial regulations were broken and the work suffered. Now the position is quite different. There are no longer any book-keepers on the staffs of the Moskvoretsky schools, nor are there any part-time electrical fitters. The funds available have been transferred to the joint office, which includes an accounts department. This office now has fifteen fitters, ten electricians, five technical supervisors, book-keepers and accountants, and two engineers (sanitary and electrical). The sixty-eight schools are divided into five groups. In each group attached to the base school of the group there is a team of three fitters and two electricians, who carry on a continuous check on their group according to a schedule drawn up by the office. Whenever anything goes wrong they are on the spot immediately, and the fault is put right.

It has also become easier for the district branch of the State Bank. Instead of sixty-eight clients it now has only one, the joint office.

In the centralised accounts department there is a clear-cut division of labour, with all necessary sections: supply, finance, audit, etc.

The joint office deals with current and capital repairs and even with new building; and for these purposes has two engineers.

A meeting of the whole school management staff was held not long ago at the joint office to discuss the first results of its work. Their conclusion was unanimous: it had completely justified the great hopes placed in it.

A SCHOOL FACTORY

ONLY a school's links with production make it a socialist one, Makarenko said, and he made this the basic proposition of his educational practice. The institutions he created in the first years of Soviet power, the Dzerzhinsky Commune and the Gorki Colony, are even now wonderful examples of educational establishments of a new type. Makarenko showed in practice what Soviet education will do if it puts itself at the service of real productive labour, the need for which had been indicated by Marx and Lenin.

'To work in the Makarenko way', Gasilov said to me, 'without doubt means that every school must have its own production unit. In the Dzerzhinsky Commune Makarenko had a complete works. That, of course, is a very happy solution to the problem, perhaps the best of all. But it would be naïve, certainly unrealistic, to expect every school to have similar production facilities. We chose another way. An inter-school works was started this year. The idea for it was born a long time ago, but all our plans remained paper ones until we found people who understood and supported the idea.'

'When creating our factory', Gasilov went on, 'we not only based ourselves on Makarenko's experience; we bore our own practice in mind. There are several schools in our district with production work: School 544, with an extended school day, whose workshops have an annual industrial production to the value of 160,000—200,000 roubles [£64,000-£80,000]; Schools 630 and 548, and Boarding School 12.'

To begin with, the works have three specialised shops. In the sewing and dressmaking shop they make dolls, mainly from polyethylene; in the assembly shop, wooden toys—dolls, furniture, motor-cars, aeroplanes, electric locomotives, etc. Raw material is supplied by enterprises of the Board for Cultural Goods of the Moscow City Economic Council.

In the biggest shop—for electrical and radio goods—work pupils of the senior classes. They produce micro-electric motors, small-scale dynamic loudspeakers, transformers, compasses, and all kinds of radio sets.

The annual production plan of the school and factory envisages an output totalling 4,270,000 roubles (£1,700,000). In addition to the 3,000 pupils of classes V-XI there are adult workers.

The question of wages for school pupils always raises most unpleasant complications. Some educationists hold that money and pedagogy are two quite incompatible things. Makarenko long ago had to fight hard against this prejudice. In School 544 the pupils' earnings come to between 20,000 and 25,000 roubles a year (£8,000—£10,000) and the profit from the workshops to 30,000 to 40,000 roubles (£12,000—£16,000). The pupils have the spending of these funds, and use them cleverly. Part is spent on school needs: school meals, equipment, cultural activity, and assistance for needy pupils. Another part is directly at the disposal of the pupil detachments and is spent on the organisation of tourist outings, summer camps, and excursions. Use of this experience is being considered for the allocation of pupils' pay in the school factory.

But the factory is far from the end. 'As soon as it begins to work', says Gasilov, 'we shall go farther. We shall introduce inter-school division of labour based on school workshops. Each school will begin to produce one or two parts in its own workshops which will go to the factory assembly line, where they will be made up into finished articles. Such an organisation of labour will enable us to bring all pupils from Class V onwards (a total of 25,000) into production activity.'

THE UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN
IS A COMMUNITY AFFAIR

The first public conference of Moskvoretsky District,
Moscow, will be held on

OCTOBER 2

This announcement, giving details of the time, place, agenda and a list of sections, could be seen everywhere in the District. In 1957, on the initiative of workers of the Moskvoretsky Aremluz Works, the first 'Council for Helping Family and School to Bring Up Children' was set up in Moskvoretsky District. Thanks to the support of the various party district committees this truly wonderful initiative spread widely throughout the District. Today there are 210 such councils in enterprises and offices, research institutes, secondary schools and colleges. Council members are elected at a general meeting and serve as a rule for two years. The number of members ranges from nine to twenty, depending on the scope of the work. Each council has a group of voluntary workers, made up of old-age pensioners, YCLers and others. For practical work the members of a council are divided into two groups: one works with the children of the workers and office staff of its enterprise only; the other works with the school. Each group has its own leader and works to a plan approved by the council. The council gets direct leadership of its work from the trade union and party organisation of the enterprise.

The tasks of these councils are varied and very responsible. Their members carry out every year an exact check of all the children of the workers and staffs of their enterprise. For each child an index card is completed, on which are recorded its school, class, and information on its progress each term. The basic aim is to see that children are able to work well at school: therefore members of higher councils keep in touch with the teachers, coach children who need help, and help with extended day groups.

They pay quite as much attention to children's leisure, organising Red Corners, sports grounds or housing estates, and setting up activity circles. They also hold general meetings of parents and children at least twice a year, for which the council and children prepare a variety of presents for parents and the best pupils, decorate an honours board for those getting distinctions in study and work, and organise an exhibition of children's work.

A council has great authority in its works; practical help to needy families, a free pass to a sanatorium for a child in poor health, improvement of housing conditions—all are within its competence. A reprimand to fathers who neglect their parental duties is a serious matter for which they use criticism in the wall newspaper, interviews and, in extreme cases, the comrades court.

The councils also develop intensive activity in the schools themselves. They help to arrange the patronage of the school of communist labour teams and of Pioneer detachments by the factory shops; they find leaders for school circles and instructors for practical work training, and organise joint activities of the school and works YCL branches. The councils give active help to the schools in equipping workshops and subject classrooms and in building greenhouses and sports grounds. They also carry out all kinds of repairs and arrange hot lunches for pupils.

Seven hundred delegates took part in this conference of councils. It was a very earnest and businesslike gathering of people vitally interested in proper education and the upbringing of their children. In the six years of their existence the councils have become such a considerable force that the conference raised the practical question of setting up a district body attached to the District Committee of the Communist Party to direct their activities. The education of children is a common task; but it is a complicated and difficult one that demands the concerted action of the family, the school and the whole of society.

SCHOOLS WEEK

IN any activity, and the more so in educational, tradition plays a very important role. It is in traditions that the community spirit is strengthened and the force of social opinion embodied. In the hands of a talented organiser traditions are a most important weapon. In 1963 the Moskvoretsky District held its third annual 'schools week' from September 1 to 8, the primary aim of which was to draw the widest possible circles of the community into school affairs.

The first day of the week was devoted to the beginning of the school year, which was marked as a great and joyous festival not only in the schools but in all the district enterprises. To the schools came representatives of patron organisations with flowers and speeches of welcome; in works and factories concerts by school amateur circles were held. Shop windows were given over to school exhibitions. Everywhere on conspicuous sites were vivid posters announcing the opening of 'schools week'.

On the second day a campaign was opened in all schools on the question of being economical and developing a communist attitude to social wealth.

The centre of attention on the third day was school books. In a ceremonial atmosphere the schoolchildren undertook to treat the books with care, and

there were exhibits of very old textbooks that still looked like new. In some schools meetings with the authors of textbooks, popular science and technical books were arranged.

The fourth day was devoted to parents. At meetings of parents teachers talked about the problems of family upbringing, parents were thanked, and certificates were awarded to parents who were bringing their children up well. And these parents willingly shared their experiences with others and took on patronage of 'unfortunate' families.

The fifth day was 'teachers' day'. In the morning every teacher received a greetings card by post; in the classrooms bouquets and warm greetings from the children awaited them. Many teachers, in addition to the usual awards of honours, also received the keys to a new flat.

The heroes of the sixth day of the week were the patrons of schools, of which the Moskvoretsky District has a great many. Festival greetings, children's concerts in factory shops and factory clubs, bouquets, every form of expression of the children's gratitude for their generous attention to the schools awaited them.

Finally, the concluding day of the week was 'Greetings, schools!' Gay columns flowed from every corner of the borough towards the Labour Sports Stadium. The leaders of the borough greeted the children on the new school year over loudspeakers. A mammoth children's festival was held in the stadium. Its programme is the same each year: a report, in the presence of thousands of guests, on what was done in the previous year and the announcement of plans for the coming one.

ANOTHER TRADITION

ANOTHER wonderful tradition in Moskvoretsky District is the annual march of pupils to the Lenin memorial, erected on the spot where Fanny Kaplan tried to assassinate the leader of the Revolution. It is an imposing spectacle—tens of thousands of schoolchildren, Pioneers, YCLers with bands and huge banners on which are inscribed the obligations undertaken for Lenin Day and their fulfilment, with portraits of party and government leaders and gay autumn flowers.

Each school has its own column on this march, led by the school head, the school party secretary, the director of the school's patron works, and the school YCL and Pioneer leaders. From loudspeakers set up along the route ring out the voices of Pioneer broadcasters telling about the good work of each school. On the pavements are crowds of excited people, who wave in greeting and applaud the smart marching and straight lines of the demonstrators. Column after column passes the memorial and lays bouquets and wreaths on its base. A column stops for only half a minute at the memorial, but what a powerful emotional and moral charge those thirty seconds hold! It is as though the youngsters become more adult, stricter in their thought; they show an added efficiency and diligence; consideration for their comrades and respect for adults become more real.

A FESTIVAL OF LABOUR

ANOTHER Moskvoretsky tradition linked with Lenin's name is Labour Day. This school festival is held annually on October 2. The concluding ceremony is usually held in the large hall of the Town Hall. In the foyer a beautifully laid out exhibition of the schools' labour achievements greets participants and guests. In the centre of the exhibition is the honours board for excellent work. Before each photograph is a brief note on why the honour was awarded.

The ceremonial of the festival is impressive. On the wall in the hall is a huge portrait of Lenin surrounded by flowers. Above it, in letters of gold, is written: 'Only through labour together with workers and peasants can one become a real communist.' The decoration on the balcony says: 'We must see to it that the Young Communist League educates all young people from twelve years old in conscious and disciplined labour.'

The festival is always opened by the secretary of the district committee of the YCL. His speech, also by tradition, lasts no longer than *five minutes*. After him one of the outstanding workers of the District takes the chair. Reports, brief and to the point, are given. Then—highlight of the festival—medals are awarded to outstanding workers. The YCL secretary reads out the list of recipients, who receive medals inscribed on one side 'to excellent worker' and on the other the date, etc., of the festival. This is followed by a reply from one of those honoured. The festival is concluded with gay relief; before and after the official ceremony an orchestra plays, young and old dance, and there is other entertainment.

THE CULTURAL CAMPAIGN

NOT all education tradition boasts the same lineage. Some have years behind them, and are well rooted; others are still in the process of formation. The cultural campaign of the Pioneers, pupils, YCL and youth of Moskvoretsky 'for the beauty and comfort of our capital' began only in 1962. It originated with the staff of School 551. The 'basic principles' of the campaign speak of the fight for communist culture in everyday life, on the streets and in public places; of the fight against survivals of the old and remnants of individualist private morality; of the need to draw the progressive working masses into this struggle, all the youth, YCLers, Pioneers, etc.

The primary forces for this campaign are the youth and school pupils; therefore this movement is given a games form which for greater romance has certain military elements. The participants in the campaign form a closely knit culture army and each is called a culture soldier. The GHQ is located at the district committee of the YCL. The whole borough is broken up into sub-divisions corresponding to school catchment areas (neighbourhood units); the participants in each are called 'Culture Army Sub-district', and have their own HQ headed by a commanders' council, whose activity is guided by the social, party and YLC organisations of the secondary school and its patron factory. The sub-district in its turn is divided into seven or eight sectors, in whose fields of action there is some factory or institution. Adult representatives of these take part in the leadership of the sector. A similar background is given to other details of the culture campaign.

The activity of the Culture Army takes nine main directions, called routes: for general education; for tidiness and order in the school and playground; for tidiness and order in streets and courtyards; for exemplary public order on the streets, on public transport and in public places; for planting and love of trees and greenery; for cleanliness and order in homes and workers' hostels; for strict observance of traffic regulations; for exemplary personal and public hygiene; and for fire prevention.

The whole activity of the Culture Army is divided into phases. In 1963 there were five: the forty-sixth anniversary of the October Revolution; New Year's Day; Lenin's birthday (April 21); the end of the school year; the fifth phase comprised summer work and ended on September 1, 1964. After each period the Culture Army sums up its work.

HOLIDAYS ARE A SERIOUS BUSINESS

IT did not take Gasilov long to convince the heads of his schools of the advantages of a proper organisation of the summer holidays. Every school, he thinks, should have its own holiday camp. Long ago Makarenko expressed concern that children came to Pioneer camps from different schools. A boy is a member of a definite school community, but in the summer he spends his time in a scratch assembly; which means that he is cut off from his school community during this period, passes out of its influence—a practice that is detrimental to the development of social attitudes.

The inculcation of community spirit is very complicated and delicate. A 'collectivist' is above all a person who is continuously aware of belonging to a definite community and who links his thoughts and actions to those of his collective. For a pupil this community can only be his school, for a worker his works or factory, for a peasant his collective or state farm. The feeling of belonging to a collective can never be developed if we accept a situation where a person belongs to a community today, another tomorrow, and the day after to yet another.

What happens in Pioneer camps? Children come from dozens of schools. Passes are given to their parents where they work. The school community plays no role whatever. One must ask what sort of allegiance between the individual and the community can there be in such a case? Or again, can such a mixed Pioneer camp be regarded as a social collective? Certainly not. We might as well call the passengers travelling on the same train a collective, or the patients staying in a sanatorium, or even a shopping queue. The children have not managed to get acquainted as they should when the time comes to say goodbye. Under such conditions the lack of community ties is willy-nilly replaced either by administrative measures or by leading strings. Both alike are repugnant to the youngsters and to the teachers, and they are repugnant to the very spirit of Soviet education. It is not surprising that many children go to Pioneer camps unwillingly and often run away.

Understanding this simple but tremendously important educational truth, the heads and teachers of Moskvoretsky schools have taken on themselves the organisation of their pupils' summer holidays, particularly for the senior pupils.

The children of the Moskvoretsky District are now happy. Previously they were separated in the holidays from their friends; they had to get used to a new order; they pined for home and school. It is much pleasanter to holiday with one's own class and teachers, and it is valuable for the school; its educational work is not cut short or broken at one of its most important links.

In banishing the old forms of summer holiday the teachers have also rejected the antiquated content. 'I often think about our Soviet Pioneer camps', says Gasilov. 'How much sincere care and labour our various organisations put into the job! The camp workers do their best, leaders compete as to who will best provide all the holiday amenities for the children. Go into any Pioneer camp; what beautifully comfortable accommodation you'd find; clean dormitories, fine nickel-plated beds, attractive rugs, snow-white bed linen, curtains at the windows, abundant food, games, films, concerts. What else is needed? A sanatorium? The children who come to such a camp inevitably adapt themselves to a sanatorium existence: they lie down, they rest, they put on weight, they delight mamma and the doctor.'

'Unfortunately our education practice is still full of the relics of every kind of "hothouse education", of false humanism', continues Gasilov. 'Whom are we actually educating in such conditions? "Everything for the children"—is that correct? "Everything for us" is the formula the children very swiftly

adopt. And what of their duties to the community? Duty, it has been said, lies in learning; if the youngster learns, especially if he learns well, he has done his duties. That is not true; for in school, too, the children are only receiving free education and using the school property. In my view we are making a mistake when we thank children for learning. It is they who should thank the state and the nation for giving them the possibility to learn, and thank them not only in words but in deeds, with labour. To prevent a person growing up into a hanger-on much needs to be done. We are deluding ourselves if we assume that school learning alone will bring up conscious citizens with a complete picture of what responsibility to the community means. And it is not merely our duty to instil into pupils that they are debtors; we must give them the possibility of redeeming their debt. And young people do this with pleasure, by the way. That is why I and our heads have no doubt as to which is better, a summer camp organised as a rest house or as a work camp. We try to arrange the holiday so that the children work in some section of running the camp for one, two or three hours a day—watering the beets, earthing up potatoes, seeing to the calves and pigs. In my view, the ideal would be for every city school to have its own farm in the country and co-operate in working on this land with some village school. Imagine how education would ring out! On one plot there would be an orchard and a soft-fruit garden; the rest would be given over to vegetables. The village children would do the spring work; and with the beginning of the holidays the town children would arrive; they would put up tents and get to work. That would be a holiday! And what scope for every kind of experiment! You don't know what the herbicides are? You haven't seen the fertilisers? O.K., we'll show you. You want to grow a new variety of wheat? With pleasure! The harvest, of course, would be for those who worked on the land. There are free hot lunches and dinners for you; and you can even sell some of it. But no hangers-on. During the winter the village children will be guests of their town friends, staying with families and going to the theatre together, to the cinema and exhibitions.'

Gasilov becomes animated. His eyes shoot brilliant sparks every now and then. It is obvious that the idea of work-friendship between city and village schools is very dear to him, and that he will battle for it with the same persistence as he battles for production-labour, for self-government, for school expeditions to every corner of the land, for the reorganisation of school management, for everything else he has started.

AS THE BOROUGH SEES GASILOV

GREAT and interesting things are being done in Moskvoretsky borough. What we have spoken of so far is only a small part of the vast, truly initiatory work in education that everybody in the borough is engaged in, from teachers to old age pensioners who have never had anything to do with teaching.

For the first time I have met a situation when problems of education are given the most prominent place in all the leading establishments of the borough. Wherever you go—to the party committee, the executive committee, the YCL committee—and whoever you talk with—political or economic leaders, factory directors, representatives of the public—everyone knows what is happening on the educational front and knows his place in the educational work.

In the creation of this, if one can so express it, universal educational activity, no small part belongs to the Director of Education. His deputy, Lyubov Ivanovna Ustinova, tells everyone that Gasilov gives way to no one when it is a question of children and their education. At twenty-eight he was head of a department in the *Narkompros* and a member of the State Learned Council.

He worked with Lunarcharsky, Krupskaya, Pokrovsky and Bubnov, and knew Makarenko very well. He began teaching very young, fought in the civil war. In the Red Army he rose rapidly from the ranks to be head of the political department of a military garrison. While in the army he became a communist. After the war he was director of a Gubernia Soviet and party school; then worked again in education departments. At sixty-three, in spite of all he has lived through, he astonishes everyone, and is the envy of all, by his energy and appetite for work.

The eight years that she has been working with Gasilov have taught Ustinova much. The clarity of purpose and persistence of the man are amazing. 'You see, it's often so difficult to realise one's plans. Not everyone is able to see a thing through to the finish. You have sketchily described the school factory but one could write a pedagogical poem about just one of these activities: productive labour in School 544, say, or the school with an extended day which started in Moskvoretsky. How many objections there were to it! But Gasilov is a persistent person and can carry on a siege for years. He will persuade, prove, argue and again persuade until he wins. Without this iron persistence, born not of ambition but of a real, sincere love of children and concern for them, we should not have schools like No. 544, and perhaps not the school with an extended day, and much else that is now not only our pride but the sense of our work.'

Gasilov loves young people, trusts them, and is not afraid to demand a great deal from them. Many of the heads of Moskvoretsky schools are thirty to thirty-five years of age, but Gasilov thinks that is not enough. He says it is quite inexplicable why you cannot entrust a school to an educated, energetic, intelligent and daring young man or woman. 'In the civil war twenty-year-olds commanded regiments, yet because of some misconception we look on these comrades of today as still immature.'

When arguing, Gasilov likes having counter-plans put to him. He never ignores a sensible suggestion and insists on giving that credit when it is due.

One of his former pupils, Svetlana Karklina, is head of School 630; she grew up in a children's home that Gasilov had directed. I did not know he had been head of an orphanage, so I went to see Karklina at her school. She met Gasilov in April 1944. She was one of more than 400 children of servicemen in a home just outside Moscow. The conditions in the home were very bad because the young people were not working. The 240 acres belonging to the home were untouched. She did not know how they would have fared if one fine day a new director had not been sent to them—Gasilov. Immediately a change began. It still seemed amazing to her how quickly it all happened, for everything was the same—the children, the staff, the land, only the director was new. And immediately there was a change.

'He began with a general meeting. Having listened to our speeches, full of complaints and demands, Gasilov didn't comfort us with hopes of help. He asked us straight to our faces: "Do you want to live like real people?" We didn't understand him at first. A few took offence: "Aren't we real people?" The director repeated his question more loudly and, not getting any answer, unfolded a bright picture of transformation. Most of all he relied on working with our hands—450 pairs of them—and on the neglected land, 240 acres. "You've incalculable wealth, your own vegetables, potatoes, milk and meat, and you're dreaming of an extra crust of bread!"'

'The next day, divided up into teams, we dug the untilled land. We worked happily and enthusiastically. Our teachers used spades along with us. And Gasilov didn't scorn dirty work.'

'Within a year the children's home was unrecognisable. We over-fulfilled our economic programme, adopted at that first meeting. We began to eat our

fill, and this feeling of healthy fullness was doubly pleasant because we had earned our bread ourselves. We began to realise the force of a collective, learned to understand such concepts as work pride and responsibility for common affairs. Mastery on the labour front had other consequences. We re-equipped our club, enlarged our library, acquired musical instruments. In short, with the arrival of Gasilov our children's home started along the Makarenko path described in *The Road to Life*.

'Gasilov liked to talk about Makarenko and his pupils, and even the eleven-year-olds knew his books. The life of his characters became intertwined with ours; we tried to do everything as in Makarenko's colony. Gasilov only smiled when we asked him to let us organise a system of mixed work teams. "I've no objection, but the commanders must be changed frequently."

'Gasilov was an inventive head and never let the slightest chance pass for us to exercise our maturity and independence. I remember once we had invited many guests to the opening of our summer camp—our patrons, soldiers and officers, party leaders. Suddenly at the very height of preparations Gasilov was taken ill. We were so used to having him in charge of everything that at first we were completely lost. Then it came to us to do everything as he would have done it, without fuss, quickly and thoroughly. Maybe that is why the collective worked faultlessly and the reception of the guests went off marvellously. It was only some time later that we found out that our head's "illness" was put on.

'It was usual for pupils and staff to gather regularly in our club in the evening, and Gasilov nearly always came. When he appeared papers would be put aside, chess games interrupted, noisy games stop. "Well, what shall it be?" he would ask. "Music or poetry?" "Music and poetry", we would say, "and then let's talk about something". Gasilov would sit at the piano and play light and serious music. The evening ended with singing conducted by Gasilov. Always he tried to instil in us a love of teaching, and he succeeded in setting up a teachers' training school as part of the home. To educate not only children but teachers had been one of his earliest dreams. Then quite suddenly he was dismissed. All our efforts to get him back failed.

'In those hard days no one thought we would see him again, but they did. A television programme, *Twenty Years After*, showed the former pupils and teachers of the children's home, and, of course, Gasilov. You can imagine our joy.'

I also talked about Gasilov with Edward Kostyashnikov, head of School 544, who works there unpaid; he used to be the head of the section on schools with a prolonged day at the Institute of Research in the Theory and History of Pedagogy.

Gasilov's organising ability and educational talent are many-sided. His head teems with ideas. Unfortunately the scope of a Director of Education is not very great. That is why even such a director as persistent as he, instead of getting on with his work and reforms, has no spend endless time going from place to place persuading (particularly frequently financial people).

Gasilov is very modest when he speaks about his department. I have heard him (and he speaks quite often) at the Polytechnical Museum addressing students and staff of teachers training at the institutes of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, and workers in factories, etc., at a seminar of the Moscow City Institute for Teachers' Refresher Courses. His talk was entitled 'From the right conviction to the right action.'

He is now finishing a labour of many years, a book on the methods of communist education. He does not consider it important to talk of who originated this or that idea.

'Personally', says Gasilov, 'I attach great importance to educational propaganda activity', and I'm proud that the district party committee has entrusted

me with running a seminar on the method of communist education for the party and economic leaders of Moskvoretsky District. The students are directors of enterprises, heads of institutions and party secretaries. Having this opportunity, I didn't lack chances to put my ideas and hear their views, and when there's general approval for some plan it will be put into operation.

In the Education Department itself the director must be first of all a propagandist and educator, and must explain as well as give orders and instructions. 'It is absolutely necessary to reach a position where your assistants not only carry out orders, but understand your logic to the very end, correct it and improve on it, and put it into effect intelligently. When this is absent the idea of leading a team is just hot air. In our little team we treasure our sessions in the philosophy seminar; that's what binds it together.'

'We think how to do with less paper work, questionnaires, reports, etc. How can we reach the stage when the Education Director is above all an experienced adviser for his teachers and school heads and not just an administrator; when he knows how to see what is positive in the work of the teachers? A director of education must inspire the teachers, must believe in the capabilities of people.'

'Finally, he must read a lot and know the education of literature: so much that is useful can be found in the educational heritage of the past.' For Gasilov it is unthinkable to be an education director without a thorough knowledge of Makarenko, and he quotes with approval the hero of Herman Matveev's story *Seventeen-year-olds*, who says in one place: 'If you don't know or don't understand Makarenko then we must study and understand. And if it should happen that someone doesn't accept him he should leave school.'

I hope the readers will not complain that nothing has been said here about the shortcomings and gaps in the education department of Moskvoretsky. It is right that not everyone in the District will agree with my estimate of the various measures carried out there. But one thing there is indisputable: there is something to be learned from the schools of Moskvoretsky District and its Education Office and organisations.

—From *Narodnoe obrazovanie*. Translated by Beatrice King.

THE AUDIOVISUAL METHOD FOREIGN LANGUAGES

I. Y. Shekhter

THE correlation of the spoken word and written word in learning a foreign language has in recent years attracted the close attention of methodologists, psychologists and linguists. They are turning their attention to one of the most important problems of contemporary theory and practice in language teaching.

It is vital to satisfy the growing need for a link between the exponents of theory on the one hand and the spate of linguist research based on the principle scientific methods in language techniques on the other. This situation is contributing more than ever to the twofold division of language: the spoken and the written word.

Learning the spoken word as compared with the written form of language demands not only its own special forms and skills but also—and this is particularly important—its own particular material. Certainly the material for oral study is, in practice, the sound of the spoken word, but nevertheless this is, in any but the simplest of situations, not yet universally recognised.

Textbooks of foreign languages based on long tradition try to develop the habit of oral work using bookish texts and written exercises. A similar approach

leads to oral study founded on the written word. Assuming that a unit of sound is not matched by a unit of writing, as a system which has its own means of expression worked out visually, then this is particularly harmful in its effect at the elementary stage. The bad effects last long. Rather a lot of teaching aids have appeared in recent years: various kinds of talking aids in which texts of an improved conventional nature and practice are concentrated.

However, any formal adaptation of written words to the aims of teaching the spoken word must not deprive them of those distinctive features which define it as a limited system with a special pattern designed for visual experience.

Too much time was given to fixing the spoken sound using the standard of 'learning to speak by using the eyes'. In fact the spoken word is heard only in exercises where pupil and teacher come into contact. Beyond these encounters those who learn foreign languages do not hear the spoken word. A dumb textbook does not speak, just as a dumb person does not converse. Written speech is brought forward under the guise of oral teaching.

The gramophone has caused an upheaval in this field. For the first time conversation could be reproduced, but unfortunately such conversation is very limited here. In addition, the record which reproduces the sound form of the written word is only partly able to come up to normal standards of speech.

Reading aloud is not equivalent to the spoken word. The listener is deprived of the chance of holding conversation. The use of records precludes any opportunity at all for intercourse; it is only possible to listen. As with the written word, the text of the dialogue remains a visual prop. Without it one can listen to the gramophone record but not in fact hear it.

The tape-recorder is a more comprehensive system of recording that implies that the recording on magnetic tape is a very much more effective means of learning speech. The listener can hear not only the recorded voice of the teacher but also his own, and so he can compare his own and that of his instructor by practice. He can control his recording, carry out corrections, and so on.

All this produces a close similarity of the tape-recording and the spoken word. Speech, even its close similarity of form, does not exist as something separate from the speaker and the particular circumstances and conditions chosen for its realisation. The tape can distinguish rhythm, intonation, and sometimes (in Russian) the stress marks. In addition to this the living word, the so-called 'significant facts', always includes a sufficient amount of important supplementary material which is linked with the reactions of the speaker to the events arising from the exchange of information itself.

By means of this link, the spoken word, developing gradually in time, absorbs facts linked with the given situation which is thought out by making an assumption from what is seen. Consequently from this information, which is heard and seen at the same time, we come to the principle of synthesising the two. This gives the opportunity of finding out about the narrative by two ways, which increases the chance of determining the content.

The first attempt to synchronise sound and vision was the work of Paul Rivenc (High School, St. Cloud, France) and Professor Peter Guberina (Zagreb University, Yugoslavia), who originated the so-called audiovisual method of acquiring foreign languages. During recent years the method has been extended to all parts of the world. The source material is the filmstrip; that for the sound is the tape, which is synchronised with the particular frame used.

It is characteristic that from the start the basic exercises seemed to hasten learning. Now certain variations are practised: the time spent ranges from two months (with five lessons a week, each of two hours' duration) up to a period of study of six or seven months (two hourly lessons twice a week).

In such a way learning by listening to the actual spoken words received a tremendous boost and was directed along new lines. One can wrangle over

particular methods and language details (the native language of the student is not brought into play, too much weight is given to the imitative exercise, the question of the choice of situation and its position in the series, and so on), but undoubtedly the results of this method outstrip those of the older methods.

By combining the filmstrip and tape-recording, which is done in the audio-visual course, the aural material is brought very close to the actual language itself. Nevertheless even the likeness is not free from those distortions of the special peculiarities of the spoken language. The problem is not only—or, to be more exact, not so much—the static expression which is inherent in the nature of the filmstrip. The visual image which possesses a certain plastic quality can easily be made to create the illusion of movement. The train on the screen need not be made to move to stimulate an express train; it is enough that the smoke is carried along by the wind and the spokes are blurred for us to know this on the motionless frame. It is a condition of learning from the strip that it is used in conjunction with the tape. The strip is a series of pictures each fixed into position. By its very nature these depict a sequence of events connected together to form a whole series of connected situations. The pictures can be described. It is possible to describe all that they portray (the speeding train, the book falling from the table), but it is impossible to force into the strip a natural conversation when the picture itself remains unchanging. The situation portrayed and the conversation last two or three minutes. The discrepancy in time between the actual spoken words and the representation of them infringes the synchronising of sound and vision.

This portrayal on the screen is unavoidably absorbed as either the theme or the background of the situation. In connection with this the attempts to use teaching films are of interest for learning speech. Such experiments are going on at present in Moscow.

Language films are not new. The first were made before the war. Making them has not been discontinued in post-war years. Until recently, however, they have been only appendages to the learning process.

The majority of films in existence nowadays are about topics which are designed to cultivate the habits and skills of speech. Separate attempts to make films for learning phonetics, grammar and translation were not crowned with success. Even so the speech films were used only as illustrative aids for the texts and themes. Usually the finished film was altered: the content was simply translated into the foreign language. The student had to understand the text during its showing and reproduce it subsequently after examining certain variations of it.

Naturally, since the speech on the screen was dictatorial in nature the repetition of it was an exercise involving only the student. No thought was given to the scholastic aims involved in such film making. The text did not bear the stamp of the oral or spoken language. The style reminds one of an article on a set topic being read aloud, or at the best a report being presented. There was the need before all else of determining the part to be played in studying foreign languages, not to adapt learning to the peculiarities of the film but to put it to the use of language learning. One of the basic principles of the sound film is the relationship of the pictures to the dialogue and it can be defined by the following rule: ' Whenever possible the words must avoid saying what is visually apparent.' If we hear the moan of a siren it is not really necessary that we are shown a picture of one; in the same way, if we see a picture of a man leaving a room he need not say ' I am leaving'. But, what is far more essential, the producer must make use more often of the situation in which speech and visual content do not match. Owing to such a discrepancy which may form a counterbalance or even a complete relationship it is possible to use an extraordinarily wealthy image.* This

* M. Martin, 'The Language of the Cinema' (*Art* 1959, p. 191).

means that the principle of 'I see what I hear' is more suitable for linking sound and vision in the language process of learning, but in the full-scale movie it gives way to the principle of 'I see one thing and hear another'. In this way we define the use of the film in language learning. However, to link the spoken word and the picture on the basic assumption 'I see what I hear' is possible for all that. The question resolves itself into what the intention of the film is and what are the ways of achieving this intention, which may have the overall aim of teaching the spoken word by listening to it being produced. The sound on the screen by this or any other principle is a counterbalance limited by the situation itself and serving it. From this point of view the sound film is a very effective aid.

The principle which is realised in recent teaching films of foreign languages can best be illustrated in the following film *Absent-minded Willie**, for example. It has three parts. In the first we have a short story elucidating the fundamental principle 'I hear what I see'. It is a simple theme: a man enters and says 'I am coming in' and there is no violation of the basic principle by inclusion of other material at this stage. A man finds a pocket-book. It contains a cinema ticket. Looking at it he (and the viewer) sees the name of the cinema, 'At the Pond', and there is a picture of it alongside; and so on.

The speech of the characters is carefully composed, i.e. it includes typical phrases characteristic of the events shown on the screen. Words must be familiar to the student as far as the film is concerned. The whole of the first part is a model in the use of only those essential parts of speech. It succeeds in making them comprehensible by combining them with images. The understanding of the structure of speech is arrived at after the first part is shown in the exercises which follow. They make use of frequent repetition. Strips and an automatic sound recording of the film on tape are employed. The second and third parts are exercises on the film itself. Their aim is to make the student prepare conversation in new situations from the first ones encountered. Exercises are based on questions and answers linked with the first part.

And so the actors in the film outline the circumstances of the loss and gain of the pocket-book. After the questions are given, silent pictures from the first part appear, which remain still. They re-establish the details essential for the answering. This is all of the plot of the short story. In unravelling it the student must give answers as though he is the person being addressed in the film. A special signal is seen which indicates to him the beginning and end of the allotted time for answering. Then the actor answers. This is a check to that of the student. It does not have to be the same as the student's in form but it must be the same in meaning. In essence this is still not free speech; prepared speech exercises are quicker.

A way of achieving free speech is demonstrated by the film exercises of the third part. Here the series are a variation on the first section. Certain episodes are in part silent, with only one of the actors speaking and the student taking on the role of the other. His speech is recorded on tape. The fresh situation guarantees the opportunity for combining certain phrases and reinforces learning. They are included in dialogue for this reason. The voice on the screen acts as a cue and is a check in itself which helps to develop the action conditioned by the subject of the first part.

Such variations guarantee a natural speech being retained intact. It will develop with time and be firmly established by the audiovisual method which is basic to the methodology of this film.

* *Absent-minded Willie*. In German. Adviser, V. I. Ivanova-Tsiganova; producer, I. C. Gabronsky. A Lenscience film production 1963. The film *The Working Day of a Student*, an English language film. Advisers, I. A. Golovina and O. A. Belskaya; producer, A. A. Bragina. Production of T.K.L. 'School Films', 1964.

Beyond these fundamental exercises one arrives at the second-stage ones which are quite essential. For example, the background for this film was drawn. This helps to focus attention on the actions of the character themselves. Some of the performance is contrived in a schematic fashion; the time taken for the passage of events is cut, so too are trivialities and scenes which have little significance; time is allowed for the voice of the announcer in sequences, which serves as a link and sometimes replaces the voice of the teacher. This permits the fulfilment of the aims for which the exercises are designed.

These films, created first in the Soviet Union, were widely acclaimed by specialists, teachers of foreign languages and students.

The classroom situation, which includes work in the film, filmstrip and tape-recorder, defines rather precisely the place of each of these technical aids, giving the opportunity of using them more effectively than would be possible otherwise for the peculiarities of class teaching. At present, on the basis of these experimental films, it is already possible to create a whole film course for a class on foreign languages which would in a short time teach them to speak quickly and correctly.

The method we have described is more fully explained in a comprehensive textbook which is organically linked in textual content to the film, filmstrip and tape-recorder which assist it.

The creative joint efforts of linguists, psychologists and educationists should not only lead language study along a broad highway, permitting quick and effective fluency, but above all should also assist in the development of new trends in science, which is a calling to serve men in carrying out his daily life.

IMPRESSIONS OF FRENCH WORK

O. A. Gromova

MANY Soviet foreign language teachers have visited various countries in recent years in order to improve their own language skills and to familiarise themselves with the methods and aims of foreign teachers of language. By this it has been possible to compare methods and aims at home and abroad.

In particular the French audiovisual method is beginning to be used in Soviet schools. The author of this article became acquainted with the ways of using this system in France. It is thought that their methods will be of interest to our readers.

In 1951 at the high school in St. Cloud a specialist centre was set up for the research and dissemination of French throughout the world. The head of this centre is the prominent scholar J. Guggenheim. A special commission investigating these studies carried out researches over a number of years, as a result of which a method for teaching people with no knowledge of the French language was worked out. The audiovisual method guarantees fluency in the spoken language after 250 hours of study in the classroom. Work takes three hours a day (two lessons each of one and a half hours), with an extra hour for laboratory work.

As much of the work is of an intensive nature, practical skills and habits must be acquired in a short time (three to four months), and the material studied must be of a minimal kind.

Selection was guided by the principle of the particular, and 163 conversations were recorded straight from life. The themes were: keeping fit; nutrition; family and life; travel and transport; health preservation; home economics; literature; art; theatre; sport. The usual number of words in these conversations numbers

312,000. From the total 1,000 words most frequently used in conversation were chosen; each was used not less than twenty-nine times.

However, it has been made clear that the series contained chief words absolutely necessary for colloquial speech (for example *autobus*, *timbre*, *veston*, *epicier*) which have a smaller frequency or use. Therefore, though the series includes the most frequently used words it seemed essential to supplement them with more typical words. They were included in a special list of sixteen themes: dress; dwellings; furniture; food products; customs; heating; lighting; town; village; means of travel; agriculture and gardening; animals; play; trades. The result was a vocabulary of 1,500 words.

By the choice of a minimal grammatical knowledge the authors of this method say that only what is essential for speech learning must be included. In opposition to the existing tradition there is in the first stage neither the past simple, the past historic, nor the imperfect, nor the construction of the interrogative. Such a practical bias by choice is in our opinion without doubt correct.

The lexical and grammatical minimal French language was made on this basis. The first part of this minimum vocabulary contains language material selected by such a consideration that the fundamentals are practical for the fullest acquisition of the French language.

This vocabulary is very popular and is widely used by compilers of teaching means. It is explained that this is what the authors take as their starting point for compiling customary conversational language, and how all the preceding work of such a kind was based on literary language.

Study by the audiovisual method completely excludes translation into the native language. The originators of this method consider that in the early stages learning to translate upsets the listener from thinking in the foreign language.

The audiovisual method is founded on sound and sight recognition; this method has the aim of creating in the participant an association link with a definite situation. Technical assistance is widely used in the work—the strip and film and tape. In the first stage the strip and the tape are used together. Film is used to summarise some sort of theme.

Using strips is justified by their easy availability and convenience. Besides, they are not expensive and permit of frequent stops being made at items which are not sufficiently memorised.

The tape-recording exactly reproduces the sound, rhythm and intonation. The application of it is rational and untiring hour after hour, which is not possible with the teacher, whose voice alters. For foreigners, voice rendering and rhythm are often associated with a change in meaning.

The fundamental particularity of the method is its clear phonetic character. All the course is carried out orally. All the teacher's efforts are focused on that in order to compel the student to understand and hear sounds, to distinguish them from others and therefore to produce them. It is also necessary for the student to try to understand the meaning of all the semantic groups, but not each word separately. All the sounds of the French language are given. The authors are right, in our view, in considering that perfecting intonation and rhythm helps in acquiring the habit of conversational language. Recent research has shown that for learning a language it is important to hear it. It develops the skill to express in speech one's own thought. One can liken the language novice to a partially deaf person who does not absorb many foreign sounds and hears especially badly those not in his own language.

Usually when we correct the student he replies 'But isn't that how I said it?' And so in the course everything is directed to that in order that at the first stage the student learns to absorb particular sounds as being associated with a particular meaning.

In the given system, learning does not proceed from sound to sentence but the other way round, for the student, not having the text before him, must remember everything by hearing.

At the first stage writing and reading are wholly excluded. Research has shown that learning language beginning with the text, with reading matter, upsets the student when he tries to understand what he does not see written.

After sixty hours of working orally (fifteen lesson periods) habits of writing are started. By this time the student has already heard, distinguished and repeated every sound of the French language. The particular aspects of orthography will not yet influence pronunciation. The task will be to write in French what has already been heard. At this stage a limited grammatical analysis will be begun.

Then, when the student has absorbed the language by hearing and writing, the teacher will introduce him to reading material.

The authors of this method are categorically against reading from filmstrips (these must be only for speaking). But in order to give the pupil a chance to read, special texts are composed using material similar to that which has been heard and used in the tasks already. These texts are given out singly and not all at once in a book. This is to preclude the student reading more than the particular text in hand when he is at home.

Such an experiment was carried out as follows. In one group students worked orally for one week, in another for two weeks and in a third for three weeks. After three months all were given written work of the same kind. Those who did oral work for longer did not experience the same difficulties in spelling, and in addition they were better in their habits of pronunciation and more fluid in speech. Those who began by reading and writing did not understand what was said to them and were helpless without a book. Study by the method is carried out in the following way. In the classroom a screen hangs on the wall in the front; in a contrasting location the teacher has the tape-recorder. The students sit along the side of the walls in such a way that they can both see and hear. The size of the group is usually about sixteen or eighteen persons. Placed near the teacher are the apparatus for projection and a pointer which can be illuminated so that some detail or other on the screen can be highlighted. On a shelf by the teacher's desk are the tape-recorder and the recordings of the lessons. Each lesson is recorded on a different reel. All the lessons are centred on the dialogue; in the opinion of the inventors of the method this is the only way of guaranteeing speech development.

The structure of each lesson is determined not by a point of grammar or of phonetics, but by one or other of the conversational themes.

At the beginning of the exercises, words essential for the dialogue are brought in. On the screen the strip is shown and the tape runs in parallel with it. Then the teacher strengthens the memory of the students on those grammatical points in the recording. The pupil must remember the parts as a whole. The teacher works over those grammatical usages covered up to that time, until the student starts to use them all spontaneously. This is achieved by copious examples, enormous training and repeating one or other of the grammatical parts in various situations until finally used by the pupil automatically. The last section is devoted to the working out of the various sounds of the language. Here the method of imitation is widely used.

In the high school a specialised aid for audiovisual work was created—the 'Voice and Image of France'. It was destined for teachers alone. In this manual all the material is included: lesson texts, questions and answers, methods of working, and so on.

Teaching began in St. Cloud in 1957. The well-known French psychologist K. Malandin kept a constant watch on the progress of this method. The results

showed to what extent the pupils knew the language beforehand so that they could be divided into groups. For this the students underwent special tests. At the end of the course they were given a passing out examination. This gave an opportunity of determining how much had been acquired during the three months. The verification of their knowledge was achieved by using specially worked out tests.

Eight years' practice in teaching by the audiovisual method has shown its effectiveness to be absolute. Now this method is used in France, Yugoslavia, England, Canada, Norway and other countries.

POSTSCRIPT

V. Rezhekak
(Zagreb University)

IT is ten years since the birth of the idea of improving the old method of teaching foreign languages in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, which relies on conversation between teacher and student.* It was decided to do this with the aid of the tape-recorder and film strip (pictures linked in sequence showing events, which explain the meaning of the text by suggestion). In this way, working youth have succeeded (who have studied in adult classes) in the shortest period to become conversationalists in a foreign tongue. On this basis was formed the so-called audiovisual method using whole patterns of words, defined for application by its development by the Philosophical Faculty of Zagreb University and the High School of St. Cloud (France).

The new method of teaching gave very quick positive results. For example, students who studied Russian by this method for six to eight hours per week could freely speak Russian on customary themes after three to four months.

Students look at filmstrips and listen to tape-recordings. The pictures help the understanding of the meaning conveyed by the recording. Then the students repeat their speech, and so they can very soon converse.

A very effective modification of this method is to use a specialised film, which is becoming basic to language learning. For this certain features of the audiovisual method have been changed and a new element arises: the film allows a sufficiently natural sequence to permit of any kind of conversation on any kind of theme.

In consequence the student understands the meaning of each part of the suggestion involved, and without recourse to translation or the help of a teacher. The organs of sight and hearing are activated and the student absorbs phrases in the foreign language completely naturally even though they are new and unfamiliar sounds.

This is not difficult to explain psychologically. The student sees an image moving on the screen and at the same time hears the speech answering to this situation. In this way there is not the time or the opportunity for him to formulate his thoughts in his own language. The situation is expressed for the students in connection of the phrase or some phrases with the thought behind them. When the filmstrip is used there is not the close link between the action and the language phrases. The student sees the picture and at first describes it in terms of his own language; then follows the recording corresponding to the picture in the foreign language. In this way a translation is produced from the native into the foreign language. In this we see a deficiency in this variant of the method.

Study with the film is as follows. The students look at the moving film (all or in part, according to the teacher's choice) and at the same time hear the

* The author was working in Moscow when he contributed this article.

accompanying speech. During the course of the showing of the film and after they imitate the pronunciation, intonation and rhythm. More often than not this is accompanied by imitating the movements, mannerisms and actions of the actors who appear on the screen. Then the students must outwardly perform the film in such or similar situations.

The film is shot and compiled in such a way that with the help of movement and expression, and above all the influence of the actors, the meaning is elucidated. When the characters speak phrases with sounds difficult for pronunciation the actor's face is given an important place so that the movement of the mouth and the expression of the face are clearly seen. The subject of the film must be interesting and logical and suitable for dialogue.

The film for study must be stopped at definite moments if the student is to imitate the dialogue. It is possible to turn to any point in the film and repeat—the film is designed for this. It is expedient to show the film without sound and to hear only the sound without the vision as well as to fix arbitrarily the selected frames.

After twenty-five to thirty studies using the film method students can turn to writing and grammar which are comparable to the audiovisual method.

It is possible to apply films to studying foreign languages in schools. The film lightens work in all kinds of schools, and for part-time students with the help of television.

In the higher schools the film method enables various demands to be met. Often the students are beginning to study a new language. The aims of such study may be different. They may be the acquisition of the skill to read scientific literature in the particular language, to teach it in school, to translate orally or in writing, and so on. The film method alleviates the learning whatever the aim. It gives the student conversational practice from which he will the more easily be able to turn to any other kind of language study.

Here is an example. The student linguist is to master the theory and practice of one or another of the languages. He will master the grammar by the help of the audiovisual method from the start before he has learnt the written word. This is not the grammar of inflexion and case endings, etc., but functional grammar which is given in the form of a dialogue. This grammar, which is natural, is used in real situations without special mental effort. If students are already strong in this then later by studying the theory of the language they will be more easily able to know the system of it. For study by the film method it is essential to make specialist films. There is much interest in this in the Soviet Union, where such films have recently been made. They are destined for the student who already has some familiarity with the language.

We assume that it is very important and useful to adapt film making for the first stage of learning, when habits are being formed during initiation into the new language. We do not consider, however, that the use of the film must only be at the elementary stage. It is essential farther on. If films enter into the teaching process in the learning of writing, grammar and so on, 'studies in the language appear more lively, more impressionable, and henceforth more effective. At later stages of study they can demonstrate not only the skills of language but also its artistic aspects.

All languages can be studied by the audiovisual method.

—From *Vestnik vysshei shkoly*. Translated by T. K. Dye.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN KINDERGARTENS

L. Smirnova

THE study of foreign languages has become a common practice in kindergartens.* The publication of articles based on the experience of individual teachers should be welcomed, but these are usually restricted to description of various aspects of work in the language field and description of the material which seems to the author most suitable for the children. All this provides some insight into the way children learn, but it is difficult to give an overall picture of this complicated process.

The basis for the methods of language teaching for children should be the principles of Soviet educational theory, which should naturally be used while taking into consideration the particular requirements of the child's age group.

Thus a basic principle in the teaching of children of the pre-school-age group is the use of visual methods. On the basis of the fact that children of the pre-school-age group have a developed visual memory, it is to be recommended to introduce the words of a foreign language by means of visual illustration of the semantic idea. The clearer the first impression, the more lasting it will be. For this reason bright, colourful toys, pictures and absorbing games should be chosen for the lessons. For memorising words designating action it is useful to use the games *Who's the Nimblest of Them All?* (the English equivalent would perhaps be a cross between 'Follow my Leader' and 'Musical Chairs') and *What Do We Do in the Morning?* (English equivalent 'Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush'). In the first game the children carry out the instructions of the teacher: *Run! March! Hop! Fly! Stop!*, etc., which conclude with the words *Sit down!* The children walk and run round the chairs, arranged in a circle with the seats turned outwards, and the number of chairs should be one less than that of the children playing. After the words *Sit down* the children take their places, but the one who does not manage to find a place falls out of the game and takes away a chair. In the second game the children sing the song *On a Cold and Frosty Morning* and go through the actions, memorising the English verbs. Sometimes it is sufficient to recall the situation with which some word or other was introduced, and immediately the children remember it.

In teaching pre-school-age children the principle of retention is of great importance: a child memorises quickly, but since these impressions are of an isolated variety frequent repetition of new words is essential in subsequent stages. For this exercises are useful in which familiar words will be repeated in various combinations and contexts. Counting games, poems, little songs and group games may well be used for this (*The English Guest*, *In the Toy Shop*, *The House in the Wood*, *The Little Bird*, etc.).

The principles of accessibility and feasibility must at all costs be observed in the teaching of foreign languages to children. This means that lessons must not be exhausting (not longer than twenty-five to thirty minutes) or overburdened with new material (not more than four or five new words). The teaching methods should be adapted to suit the mental and physical characteristics of the child. The course the lessons take should be as varied as possible. There could be a certain kind of lesson with the attractions of outdoor games and physical exercises, ordinary and musical games, an improvised concert, a walk, etc. It is essential to combine individual work with collective work. The most complicated work is that connected with pronunciation; we are of the opinion

* Soviet kindergartens cater for children under seven who in Britain would be in infant school. Attendance is voluntary; many provide language teaching where the parents want it.—Editor.

that particular difficulties arise in work with children who are losing their teeth.

In that period it is most important to develop the child's ear and his ability to hear foreign sounds. It should be noted that children begin fairly quickly to hear and correct the mistakes of their classmates.

The principle of logical sequence in language teaching should be implemented in conjunction with the overall development of the child and his knowledge of the native language. For the commencement of language teaching we regard five as the most suitable age, when the foundations of the native language have been laid.

In our opinion the aim of the study of a foreign language at the pre-school age is to master elementary ability in colloquial speech with a basic vocabulary essential for the description of the world surrounding the child. The numerical limits of this vocabulary have been ascertained as follows. A child of five to seven years should master around 350 foreign words formed into simple sentences. This allows children to use elementary colloquial speech. The ratio of the different parts of speech should be observed intelligently: nouns fifty per cent, verbs thirty per cent, adjectives ten per cent, and other parts of speech ten per cent. A similar distribution of vocabulary is related to the grammatical classification of vocabulary in the native language for children of pre-school age. This vocabulary can be combined in a series of themes, such as *I, My family, Pets and wild animals, My clothes, etc.*

It is very important that language lessons are inserted into the general course of nursery-school teaching.

In language teaching the children should be presented with definite aims. Children's inquisitiveness favours successful teaching, so that once the teacher has shown round a book in a foreign language with pictures he can set the task of memorising the names of the objects or animals, so that the children can understand the contents of the book; in order to start to play lotto it is essential to memorise a few new words; in order to understand the contents of a new song or poem definite words must be memorised; from time to time children should be prepared for recitations before their parents, or meetings should be arranged with people who have a good command of the foreign language.

The principle of active participation in the teaching of small children finds expression in the children's aspirations to use their knowledge in answering questions or in taking part in games or recitations. Experience shows that an inner urge for active participation can be aroused in children. For example, they try to teach the foreign language to their parents, brothers, sisters and neighbours. The principles of conscious application should also be accorded a place in the teaching of foreign languages to children. Experience shows that the element of conscious application is essential in the demonstration of pronunciation (when the teacher shows the right tongue position) and the explanation of grammatical phenomena (the comparison of the formation of plural nouns in the native and the foreign language and the formation of personal pronouns, etc.). In this connection attention should be paid to the role of the native language in language teaching. There is no need artificially to exclude Russian in the early stages of the teaching of a foreign language. Games, for example, should be explained in the native language. The translation of a poem or song into Russian cuts down by half the amount of work spent in learning it. As more of the foreign language is learnt so the need for the use of the native language will be cut down and disappear altogether.

The implementation of didactic principles in language teaching for children will provide this necessary venture with a scientific foundation.

—From *Narodnoe obrazovanie*. Translated by Katherine Villiers.

A BOUQUET OF SOVIET POETS

WALTER MAY

We sent the author a parcel of new volumes of poetry received in the SCR library. In this nosegay he gives the scent of the verse.

MARK ANANYEVICH SHEKHTER (1911-63) was born in Ekaterinoslav (today Dnepropetrovsk) in a doctor's family. He studied electro-technics and medicine, and began to publish poems in 1929. During the last war he worked as the editor of a front-line paper, and was decorated with first-class honours. He is known for half-a-score of collections of verse, and as a skilled translator of Czech, Ukrainian, Latvian, Georgian, Yiddish and foreign poets.

He is a lyrical poet by nature, and follows his true bent. He knows the value of the poetic word, and writes in a restrained manner without sacrificing vitality. His book of verse *Lyrical Weather* consists of new poems dealing with the present day, the meaning of life, the fate of man. He loves the beauty of his native land, and enshrines it in his sincere and humane verses.

It might be interesting to compare his quiet but evocative *Babiy Yar* with the better-known outcry of Yevtushenko:

Why should I speak of Greece's fallen column?
The Eternal City I have yet to meet.
The Pyramids of Egypt, vast and solemn,
Have never lain, dear friends, before my feet.

Of Nazareth's roofs I paint for you no picture,
Nor of Arabian dawns as fierce as fire.
I was in Kiev.

From my hospital stretcher
I saw revealed the lines of Babiy Yar.

And there such silence—ominous, appalling,
That light of day has vile for me become.
There wanders sorrow silently still calling
The hundred thousand inmates of one tomb.

To seek far distant ruins I'm not impatient . . .
Here sleeps the War.
In no wise far away.
The poplars whisper something in an ancient
Already half-forgotten tongue today.

Shekhter is a modest poet, not 'deep', as he says of himself, but direct and illuminating.

* * *

SAMUIL ZALMANOVICH GALKIN (1897-1960) was a Jewish Soviet poet who began to publish verse in 1920. He also wrote some historical plays. His main task has been the translation into Yiddish of Russian and foreign classics. He has done some Pushkin pieces, *Mozart and Salieri* and *A Feast in the Time of the Plague*, and Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Forty years of his life were given to this task, and to the writing of many philosophic poems. Just before he died he had prepared a book for printing, called *Poems of Latter Years*. It displays his clarity of thought, precision of expression and exquisite design.

It contains three cycles of poems: *And This Still Troubles Me*, *Farsightedness*, and *Book of Love*. A fragment may give a little indication of its fragrance:

As pomegranate with seeds, the soul is too
With wishes full, and to each wish is true.

Of these one nestles nearest, last to stay,
Reminding us of her the live-long day.

Who first from Adam did her life derive,
Although you may not ever call her Eve.

For her sake with a rib you'd gladly part,
And count as bliss her torture of your heart.

From childhood you began to build her tower,
But could not quite complete it till this hour.

So it is now—at night when silence falls,
I seek a stone to fortify its walls.

Among those who have translated his work are Akhmatova, Aseyev, Marshak and Slutsky. If they have given as true a rendering as Soviet poet-translators usually do, one can only imagine how fine the original Yiddish must have been.

* * *

SERGEY ALEXANDROVICH SHVETSOV (b. 1908) came from a worker's family, and studied in an editorial and publishing institute. He served as a war correspondent, and was awarded several medals. He began to publish his satirical poems in the late 1920s. Since the last war five collections of his verse have appeared; the present volume, *A Portrait Likeness*, was published in 1962. The targets for his pen include parasites, warmongers, bureaucrats, careerists and time-servers. Many poems deal with purely literary matters, and particularly with those who wish to deviate from the broad stream of the development of Soviet literature.

It is a pity that much satire is ephemeral, especially the satire of occasion. It is a joy that poets never cease to lampoon the pomposity of fatheads and fools. Here is just a taste of *Allen Dulles, Moralist*:

Political neutrality
He classed as amorality,
He wants another session
Of real humane aggression.
His concept of nobility
Is atom-bomb hostility,
And idealistic dreams—
Colonialist régimes.

And the critics—*The Suffering of a Young Author*:

They treat young authors strangely, surely?
They praise them here, and there condemn,
Immortalise them far too early,
Or bury them before their time.

He knows how to poke fun at the poets, too—*There are Such*:

A poet he, and she for sure,
Their age combined, just forty-four.
They sit in silence all the day

With nothing in their souls to say.
All speech superfluous. Feel without it.
And then they write long poems about it.

Young poets should enjoy Shvetsov. He is lively and funny.

* * *

VIKTOR IVANOVICH PARFENTYEV (b. 1936) is a young Moscow poet who studies in the Maxim Gorky Institute of Literature. The slim little booklet *Nikita Gate* is his first collection of verse. The poems are beautiful little pieces of finely integrated lyrical form, with a clear sense of design. The poet penetrates with sensitivity below the surface of Russian life and nature, and brings out its picturesqueness. His youth is evident in some of his work, but nevertheless he can command his medium with such finely observed poems as *Highways and Byways*:

Again they ring,
The long-familiar highways,
Again the rains go streaming on the plain,
And showers of shiny needles on the byways
Entwine their threads with grass and flowers again.
The roadways lie
Beneath a film of mica,
Down to the finest pebbles purified,
And smell again,
Infused with birch-trees' nectar,
From beauty bursting forth on every side.
And thus comes March,
Thus stealthily approaches
Towards the forest's throat
The early spring,
That even birds, caught unawares, are voiceless,
That dawns before the dark their radiance bring.
Again, as if on winter taking vengeance,
The earth absorbs warm raindrops, is refreshed,
And opening wide her copses in acceptance,
Allows the spring to snuggle in her breast,

* * *

GABIL IMAMVERDIEV (b. 1926) is an Azerbaijani poet from Baku. He comes from a railway worker's family. He trained in a pedagogical institute, became a schoolmaster, and later was a correspondent for school journals. It is not surprising that many of his poems deal with school and scholars, the rising generation, and the challenge of life. His first collection of verse appeared in 1950. It is interesting to see the approach of such a poet, far removed from Moscow and centralising effects, developing an individual outlook, and dealing so freshly with life around him. The big ZIL cars and the VIPs come to Baku, of course, but he soon puts them in their proper place:

All your life you persistently dreamed of a Zil.

Is it possible that
The dream was of nothing at all?
And you've now reached your goal
And life is complete,
And sleepily year follows year.
Where are you going, my dear?
Tell me, where?

His poems have been translated by several poets, and again one feels that the originals must have been of high quality. *Waterfall* is a good title, for the work is lucid, lively, sparkling and moving.

* * *

STEPAN PETROVICH SHCHIPACHEV (b. 1899) comes from a peasant family. His childhood and youth were full of deprivation and hard work. He was a farm labourer, and also worked in the asbestos mines and as a shop assistant. In 1919 he volunteered for the Red Army. He completed his studies at the Military Pedagogical Institute and became a military educational lecturer. During the last war he was a correspondent for *Pravda* and was thrice decorated. His first collection was published in Simferopol in 1923. Since then more than a score of books of verse have been issued, one of the later ones being the small collection called *Thoughts*.

Shchipachev is a committed poet, and follows the official line. He writes in a clear, uncomplicated style, and is humble about his own work. As he says:

Not every line here burns and calls,
Not every verse as bright as dawn . . .

Nevertheless he is able to deal tellingly with the problems of old age, with the new space-age, and with young people's place in it, and to keep faith in his work and in life:

My lines are not gushing nor hoarse
But I would not alter the score,
In love with life, like my verse,
My soul is made young once more.

* * *

WHAT characterises all these poets is a common humanity in their work. There is a love of beauty, a facing up to life, a belief in its purpose, a rejection of the ivory tower, a commitment to the present and to the future, with an acknowledgment of the traditions of the past. Reading other contemporary Soviet poetry one is struck by the part women poets are playing in this surge of poetic life in the USSR. They bring a new and truly feminine light to bear on the problems of life and society, and particularly on the problems of war and its aftermath.

Alexei Surkov sums it up in *Over a Cup of Tea at the P.E.N. Club*:

. . . We're not offended, that his regulation
Our patron, the people, dictates to the Muse.
Drawing-room wisdom's extreme limitation
He does not clamp on our poets, of course.
Now in our land, over song's inspiration,
Higher than freedom, the law's in force.
All which is free to the eye in our firmament,
Liberal times have placed under my hand.
Friend of constructors, a new kind of armament,
Poetry thus has become in our land.
Loving all life, and the sun, and humanity,
We've joined a world of heroic deeds.
To speak with the millions, to live for their sanity,
These are the bounds of our highest needs.

—Translations by Walter May.

Moscow Diary

SCIENTISTS IN SPACE

Robert Daglish

THREE were some notable differences about the celebration of the latest Soviet space achievement. The pilot, scientist and doctor who orbited the earth sixteen times in their three-seater spaceship rode into Moscow for a heroes' welcome at the head of the motorcade with their wives on the back seat of the car and the Government in a car following behind. During the meeting in Red Square, First Secretary Brezhnev spoke of space exploration as something far too serious to be treated as a kind of race. It was pleasant, he said, for Soviet people to know that they led the world in this field, but he stressed that the idea of a 'game of chance' in space was completely alien to them. The press conference at Moscow University was presided over by Mstislav Keldysh, President of the Academy of Sciences. He introduced the three space-men and they told their story themselves. No other speeches were made, and far less was said than on previous occasions about politics and priority. The atmosphere was pleasantly informal. During the speeches university students who had managed to squeeze into the hall stepped up to the platform and collected autographs of all the nine space pilots who were present. As the conference drew to a close and Keldysh answered the last of the innumerable questions, students, pressmen and diplomats were all crowding round the platform, taking photographs and exchanging remarks with Valentina Nikolaeva-Tereshkova, Titov, Gagarin and the others in a manner less guarded than I have ever known.

By emphasising this informality I do not wish to suggest that the home-comings of previous spacemen were stiff and starchy affairs, with the cosmonauts taking a back seat. On the contrary, even in those days I was impressed by Gagarin's freshness and sincerity and Titov's lively personality. But in those days it was perhaps natural that triumph and jubilation should tend to overshadow the scientific side. The present restraint and emphasis on hard facts indicate that the young science of cosmonautics, as it is called here, is growing up, and growing up fast.

By the time these notes appear much more will have been written about the scientific side; but, for the record, here are the salient facts as they were given to the press by the spacemen themselves.

The tasks of the twenty-four hour operational programme were divided up among the three occupants of the spaceship so that continuous observations could be carried out. On previous flights there had always been a gap while the space-man slept. No one wore a spacesuit because the ship was a particularly reliable machine equipped with two retro-rockets and soft-landing gear consisting of parachutes and jets. Colonel Komarov, who captained it, had done a full course of space training, but the two scientists, Feoktistov and Yegorov, had managed with a shortened pre-flight course, which did not include the usual long spell of solitude in an isolation chamber. In the pre-flight stage simulator stands were used to test teamwork, and there was a complete dress rehearsal in a dummy spaceship. The new design of the ship, with its two retro-rockets and ion-velocity orientation system, made it possible to abandon the former 'drag orbits', and the *Voskhod* flew higher (409km.) than any other spacecraft.

Two of the cosmonauts are considerably older than their predecessors. Komarov and Feoktistov are both nearing forty, but their pulse rate and breathing were slower and more regular during the lift-off than those of Dr. Yegorov, who is only twenty-six. Feoktistov, the scientist, was mainly interested

in observing the terrestrial horizon and its uses for astro-navigation. He says that even in conditions of weightlessness it is possible to use a sextant and navigate by those time-honoured friends of mariners the Bull and the Bear. His other experiments included watching the behaviour of a gas-bubble in liquid—when shaken it disintegrated and did not re-form. Dr. Yegorov, the young Komsomol member, went into space to check personally the functioning of the central nervous system and the cosmonauts' ability to work. The usual data on the cardio-vascular system, respiration and the functional condition of the analysers were telemetered to earth, but Yegorov was able to make additional measurements of the bio-currents of the brain and the electric potentials set up when moving the eye voluntarily or involuntarily, or the wrist during writing, and so on. He also tested the colour sensitivity of the eye and the tone of the eye muscles; and particular attention was paid to the vestibulatory apparatus. His participation—and, of course, the fact that there were three men together in the spaceship—helped to clarify various subjective factors in space flight. When Feoktistov and Yevgorov closed their eyes in the weightless condition they felt as though they were suspended face downwards, whereas Colonel Komarov, perhaps because of his longer training, experienced no such sensation. Dr. Yegorov was able to take blood samples during the flight and noted that in the weightless condition the upper figure of blood pressure declined while the lower figure remained the same.

The character of grey-haired Konstantin Feoktistov seems to have caught the popular imagination most. A boy partisan during the war, he faced a German firing squad at the age of sixteen, escaping miraculously with a bullet wound in the neck; but it would be difficult to guess this daring nature under his quiet and unassuming manner, so completely devoid of pose. Unlike all his predecessors in space, he is not a Party member. Colonel Komarov, the oldest and gravest of the cosmonauts, leaves an impression of rock-like reliability and determination. Dr. Yegorov, the youngest, has a ready-made smile and laughs easily, but is quickly serious again. One is not surprised to hear that the three men took an oath at Lenin's tomb before the flight. They are serious men doing a serious job, and one feels their sense of responsibility as representatives not only of their country but of humanity in general, whose image they may one day be called upon to carry to another planet.

A NEW ORTHOGRAPHY

AT the prospect of waking up one morning and suddenly finding themselves only half-literate a large section of the Soviet *intelligentsia* have been up in arms for the past few weeks. Opponents of the proposed spelling reform among well-known writers include Leonid Leonov, Marietta Shaginyan and the poets Isakovsky and Tikhon Syomushkin.

The 1956 rules of Russian orthography with the proposed amendments and revision in parallel columns covered four full pages in the two issues of *Izvestia* for September 23 and 24. At first glance they appear to offer some tempting simplifications, particularly for the learner. For instance, the old 'hard sign', which had been retained in 1956, should now, it is proposed, be completely abolished, leaving its three disjunctive functions entirely to the 'soft sign'. If the new rules are adopted one will not have to scratch one's head wondering whether to write Russian *и* (i) or *ы* (y) after the letter *ц* (ts) because the new rules propose that it shall always be *и* (i). The 1956 rule on when to write 'e' and when to write 'o' after the sibilants (*ж*, *ч*, *ш*, *щ*, *ц*) contained eleven conditions with various sub-sections and notes, some of which, as the new project points out, are contradictory. The new rule reduces this confusion to the apparently simple statement that one must write 'o' if the syllable is

stressed and 'e' if it is unstressed. And so on, through eleven other rules which have been completely revised and five which are partially amended.

Before recording the criticisms that have been levelled at this project one must give the academicians credit for an extremely comprehensive attempt at simplification and a daring, not to say reckless, approach to the problem of spelling. Their project takes into account proposals from various public institutions and private individuals, and they appear to have drawn the line only at latinising the present alphabet or introducing new letters. The fact that such far-reaching changes are being proposed and seriously considered should give pause to those who have come to regard the Russian mentality as incorrigibly conservative, 'Victorian', and so on.

Conservative or not, however, the project has raised a storm. Tikhon Syomushkin began his contribution to the discussion in *Izvestia* by tilting at the academicians with a passage from Swift in which certain professors of language are discussing the advantages of abolishing words altogether. Syomushkin claims that the new rules makes Russian spelling not simpler but more difficult, and that this would hinder the spread of Russian abroad and prove a real disaster for Soviet schoolchildren. The 'simplification' is 'artificial' and ignores the feelings of Russian people. The confusion of the visual memory and upsetting of established spelling habits would mean that they would be unable to use either the new or the old rules correctly. The cost of reprinting millions of books, particularly school books, and destroying old ones would be enormous. As regards the proposals themselves, these are neither well thought out nor consistent. Take, for instance, the conjugation of Russian verbs. Under the proposed rules on the use of the soft sign it will in many cases be impossible to tell the singular imperative form of the verb from the noun of the same root. The use of 'e' and 'o' according to stress would lead to confusion and unsightly irregularities in such common words as *идти* ('to go'), *Беречь* ('to keep') and *течь* ('to flow'). And the declensions of nouns would fare no better. Words once easily recognisable as sharing a common root would become rootless ciphers. If the third declension of feminine nouns ending in a soft sign were ruined by the abolition of the soft sign after sibilants, the already common mistake of declining *мышь* ('mouse') as a masculine noun would spread like wildfire, and no Russian, quips Syomushkin, will be able to cope with his native mouse.

But the proposal that has caused the biggest hullabaloo is that to abolish *и* after *ц* (ts). Even beginners at Russian will have realised how very, very Russian that difficult sound is. I myself have often derived pleasure from hearing it coming through loud and clear from the lips of a good Russian speaker. Now, if the new rule is introduced, it will disappear from such words as *отцы* ('fathers'), *огурцы* ('cucumbers') and *цыгане* ('gipsy'). The academicians claim the new spelling with *и* will in fact make no difference to the pronunciation and have invited their opponents to record the sounds, then clip the tape so that the sounds are interchanged and try out the results on their friends. But Isaakovsky replies that the results, when he tried it, completely confirmed him in opposition to the new rule.

The dangers to poetry have been stressed not only by poets themselves. Smirin, a Moscow historian, points out the loss of melody caused by the removal of the double 'n' in such words as 'osenny' and 'tumanny', and quotes Blok effectively to illustrate his point.

In spite of the bolts being hurled at them from various quarters, members of the Academy's orthographical commission are still to be observed imperturbably riding the flood of criticism. Panov, the vice-chairman, writing in *Izvestia* on October 13 on 'Force of Habit', compares the unpleasant visual sensations Russians would inevitably experience for a time with the inconvenience tem-

porarily caused by the currency reform of a few years ago. Complaining that it is 'wrong' to write мышь ('mouse') without a soft sign and огурцы ('cucumbers') without a 'ы' is very similar to the then current grumble that it was 'wrong' to say a box of matches cost one kopek when it really cost ten. While admitting the usefulness of the soft sign to differentiate one declension of nouns or conjugation of verbs from another, he points out that there has been an equally strong tendency in the development of Russian to shake off differentiated spellings, citing the well-known example of 'mir', which used to be spelt with the Latin 'i' when it meant 'world' and a Russian 'i' (и) in the sense of 'peace'. Since the use of 'i' was abandoned no one has ever had any difficulty in distinguishing the two meanings.

At the bottom of Panov's argument is the idea that it is a fallacy to identify language with spelling; we shall not 'spoil' the language, he says, by reforming the spelling, but we shall save time and trouble for future generations by recording it with a more logical system of symbols. He is taken to task severely on this point by Marietta Shaginyan, who in her seventy-seventh year is still considered one of the best stylists in Soviet journalism and brings to the subject a wealth of experience and reflection. 'If by "spelling"', she writes in reply to Panov, 'the author means "orthography", which is an essential part of grammar, to deny its connection with the language is to fall into complete abstractionism. The connection between grammar and language was made sacred by the genius of Lomonosov in the introduction to his classical grammar.'

Most of Mrs. Shaginyan's long and interesting article (*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, October 22) concerns the influence of tradition and habit on our lives in general, the great gains to be had from the acquisition of good habits, and the losses incurred by continual unwarranted petty changes, of which she gives several amusing examples from everyday life. English traditionalism, as in some of her other articles, comes in for its full measure of praise. In fact, the hero of her argument is an Englishman who told her during a Channel crossing that any changes affecting the lives of millions of people should be called forth only by social necessity. This is all a very far cry from the old Russian joke about the English writing Manchester and pronouncing it Liverpool. But the appeal to tradition that many writers are making at present is not a blind one. If the reforms are carried, the bill, it is estimated, will run into millions of roubles in terms of new books, reorganisation of school programmes, and man-hours spent on retraining teachers, editors and printers, not to mention the initial losses in other professions. The visual confusion to start with would be enormous. Most people I have spoken to think it extremely unlikely, for this reason alone, that the reform will be put into effect. On the other hand, the Academy of Sciences project was officially commissioned and much time and trouble has already been spent on bringing it out.*

INNOCENT UNTIL PROVED GUILTY

UNTIL quite recently a certain vagueness has surrounded the subject of the presumption of innocence in Soviet law. The vagueness owes its origin to the attitude inculcated among procurators by Vyshinsky at the time of the Stalin cult. As late as 1958 a law student whom I questioned told me the problem did not exist under Soviet law and that a person under investigation was neither innocent nor guilty until the facts of the case had been decided upon. It seemed to me an odd proposition at the time, but I never felt myself

* The view expressed here on the spelling reform is our correspondent's own and not that of the Editor. Mr. Daglish has not, we think, given sufficient weight to the views of teachers and the present difficulties of Russian orthography.

qualified to argue about it. Following the press this summer, I have been relieved to see the matter cleared up in no uncertain terms.

It appears that this confusion existed not only in the minds of law students but in some procurators' heads as well. In an article for *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, M. S. Strogovich, a Moscow professor of law, wrote: 'Until the court has pronounced judgment, until it has finally decided the case, the defendant cannot be considered guilty, cannot be considered a criminal, no matter how grave and convincing the evidence collected against him may be.' Last August, however, a letter from G. Filimonov, a Chelyabinsk procurator, appeared in the same paper, claiming that the professor was utterly mistaken. 'You are wrong, Comrade Professor! If we accept your interpretation of the law it will be necessary to abolish the investigatory bodies and the institution of prosecuting counsel. Otherwise, according to your theory it appears that the procurator submits an innocent man for trial! That the prosecution makes its indictment against an innocent person! Can this be conceded? Surely it is simply absurd! No, Comrade Professor, no one will ever accept your interpretation!'

In the same strident tones Filimonov went on to say that it was the procurator's job to bring before the court only guilty persons and to indict them before the court, leaving the court to decide only to what extent the accused was guilty and pass sentence accordingly.

Professor Strogovich was not slow to reply to this procurator's dangerously incorrect view of his function as an officer of the law. Quoting Soviet law on the subject, the professor wrote in the same issue: 'A verdict of guilty cannot be based on assumption and is only brought down on condition that it was proved during trial in court that the accused was guilty of a crime.' He also referred to the practice followed by a magistrate on receiving a statement of a case from the procurator with his conclusion of 'guilty' appended to it. If the magistrate decides that sufficient grounds exist, he places the case before the court *without* in any way, the professor stresses, deciding in advance the question of the defendant's guilt. 'It is absolutely clear', he goes on, 'that the conclusions arrived at by the investigating authorities and the procurator concerning the guilt of the accused, and expressed in the indictment, are in no way binding upon the court and cannot predetermine its judgment.' In reply to Filimonov's prediction concerning his 'interpretation' of the law, he added: 'Of course, what I say may or may not be accepted. But what the law says will have to be accepted by everyone, and Procurator Filimonov is no exception.'

Articles that followed this exchange showed pretty clearly that the Professor's is the correct and accepted view. One correspondent, for instance, likened Filimonov to a doctor who thought it possible to cut the carotid artery without fatal results. They also cited examples from judicial practice that showed that this argument was by no means academic, and that there have been cases where misconceptions of the court's function have arisen. It is good to know that doubt about such issues is being dealt with energetically.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN FAIRY TALES ?

THE fairy tale for adults with a good deal of hard political thinking packed into its seemingly innocent dialogue and plot has been a popular form on the Soviet stage for many years. Anton Schwartz was a master in this field and used his pen skilfully to attack all kinds of abuses and twisting of standards, from the craving to submit to authority which he scoured in *The Dragon and The King is Naked* to less dangerous weaknesses in such frolics as *An Ordinary Miracle*.

But until I was asked recently to translate Samuel Marshak's *The Clever Things* I had not realised that his fairy tales were also as much for grown-ups

as for children. Marshak is famous abroad, of course, as a translator of Shakespeare and Burns and many other classics into Russian, but he was also a lyric poet of no mean stature and a very popular children's writer. His son, a physicist who translates Jane Austen in his spare time, tells me that when his father died he also left many Chekhovian short stories that have never been published.

The 'clever things' of Marshak's last play are the traditional stuff of fairy-land—seven-league boots, magic mirror, cap of invisibility, and magic sword. But it is not long before one realises that the references are all to the clever things of modern life, from radio and television to rickets and the H-bomb, which are liable to behave very badly when mishandled. This subtle little message against the bomb and other abuses of intelligence is not aimed at some approved political target but touches us all, and through a number of very funny situations Marshak presses home in a fairy-tale setting that is as full of jokes and music as a Christmas pantomime. In fact, one feels that if only someone in Britain would take it up it might make a very good pantomime indeed.

AT THREE BIRCHES

A short story by

Leonid Vorobiev

ON the tenth, a Saturday, Lyubka left Konstantin and ran off with a young man from the town. When a year had gone by, and the tenth came round again, Konstantin went into the village, to his cousin's, and drank himself into forgetfulness. He was immensely strong, but he had no head for vodka—one pint and he was out. It was only by luck that he managed to reach his house, about a mile from the village, beside the watermill; on the way he fell in front of a horse—the driver swerved to avoid him but the axle of the cart badly cut and grazed his leg, and the leg took a long time to heal.

Now it was the tenth again, another year had passed, and in the morning Konstantin set off for his melancholy celebration. The day was hot and sultry, unusual for August; it didn't feel like the end of summer.

Konstantin remembered with complete clarity the day Lyubka had left him and as he walked along he pictured everything in his mind just as it had happened. He had gone first to the administration office and then to the store, and talked over the repairs due to be done in the mill. He had reached home at evening and crossed over the stream when the shadows of the ricks stretched for a quarter of a mile. He had found the lock on the door and the key in its usual hiding place. Lyubka was not at home, there was no note or message from her. She had run away, left him without a word. Only by the disorder in the house could Konstantin see how hurriedly she had gone.

He had known, of course, about the way Lyubka flirted and played around with the lads from the town who came for the harvest—the villagers had seen to that. But he had said nothing, for he knew she was gay and full of fun. Only once, when she'd come home late, a bit the worse for wine, had he scolded her and even raised his hand to her—but he hadn't struck her. And now he deeply regretted that he hadn't given her a beating and half-killed her at the time.

As he looked round the empty house he put two and two together and felt sure that she had run off with Stepan—he was the one who had been the main subject of the village gossip. For a while Konstantin sat on the bench in the corner, and then went out to the mill, crossed the street, climbed up the treeless slope beyond, sat down on the ground near the hayrick, and gazed at the forest which surrounded the stream and extended far way into the distance.

Both then and later, the thought that caused him most pain was that, perhaps

at that very moment, Lyubka and Stepan were thinking of him and having a good laugh at his expense. He tried to imagine Lyubka in her new surroundings—but nothing was as intolerable as the thought of her discussing him with Stepan. He felt all the more bitter and grieved because he had never expected that anyone could behave like this.

For a year he lived alone, but it was difficult keeping house as well as running the mill, and being on his own was dreary. He often went up to his favourite spot on the other side of the stream, where he would sit and think. And one day—after the time he was drunk and nearly fell under the horse—he realised that he could not go on like this: sooner or later he would end by jumping into the millpond.

Having made up his mind, he went into the village and persuaded Alexandra to come and live with him. She was a middle-aged woman, hard-working and still beautiful. As a young girl she had had an illegitimate child, and the villagers treated her brutally, warning off any would-be suitors. But in time all was forgotten; her son grew up and went away to learn a trade. Alexandra remained alone. So now Konstantin called on her and asked her to come to him.

She came. She was still timid from the time of her youthful indiscretion, and probably for that reason she spoke little. Konstantin, too, disliked chatter. And so they began to live together, quietly and not unhappily. But on this anniversary the old sorrow welled up in Konstantin's spirit, and he set off for his cousin's.

* * *

HE walked past the ravine, overgrown with sedge and alders, and up a small hillock to the three birch trees. These trees, crowning the slight rise, all grew out of one root. From this point the village ahead was already visible through the fir grove; behind, the mill with the house near it could still be seen. When he stopped for a moment and looked back, Konstantin noticed the figure of Alexandra still standing by the house, evidently watching him.

'She knows what I've gone out for', he thought. 'She's worried.' He decided he wouldn't drink much, so that there would be no repetition of last year's accident. But then all the details of Lyubka's desertion suddenly surged in his mind, and he shook his head hopelessly.

Konstantin returned home towards evening. He was not very drunk, and he carried a bag of doughnuts, which he knew Alexandra liked to eat with her tea. He had a bottle of red wine in his pocket for them to drink together.

The heat seemed even more intense although evening was coming on, but a cloud—white, but dense and heavy—was creeping from the horizon to the middle of the sky. And just as Konstantin was taking off his boots in the porch there came a rumble of thunder and a flash of lightning. The cloud split, revealing its dark interior. Drops of slanting rain began to rattle on the roof and windows like peas. In a minute, darkness had fallen and the rain became a wall. Soon hail started bouncing off the roof and the woodpile and quickly soaked into the earth, which turned black with moisture.

The thunderstorm passed over, but the heavy rain continued. They started to get ready for bed.

Konstantin was lying on the bed, while Alexandra washed up, when there was a knock at the door. At first it was so gentle that Konstantin thought he had imagined it. Then it came again, louder.

Alexandra threw her tea-towel over the back of a chair and went to the window, from which the porch could be seen. She looked for a long time, as though she couldn't make out who was there, or else was very interested in the visitor.

'Well, come on', said Konstantin, 'open the door'.

Alexandra swallowed with difficulty, and stammered, in a strained, choking voice, 'It's her . . . Lyubka . . .

Konstantin jumped out of bed, pulled on his trousers and ran towards the door. Alexandra rushed after him, seizing him by the shoulder. 'Surely you're not going to open it', she said in the same unnatural voice.

Konstantin shook his shoulder free of her grasp and said quietly, 'Of course I am. She's a human being, after all.'

Lyubka entered, wet to the skin, and immediately sat down on the bench. After sitting a little while she said tartly, 'You've got company, I see', and without waiting for an answer she observed, 'and sitting in the dark, too. Economising, eh?'

'Go and dry yourself by the stove', said Konstantin, 'then you can lie down on the bunk. And Sasha, you bring the camp bed'. Sasha went out without a word, and Konstantin climbed up on the sleeping platform.

Lyubka remarked casually, addressing nobody in particular, 'I've left him. He was no good.'

Alexandra came back and began to make up the camp bed. The rain rustled on the road outside. Nobody spoke.

* * *

NEARLY a week had passed since the night Lyubka returned. Every morning Konstantin went off to the mill, hurried back for a hasty meal at mid-day, and returned from work late in the evening. Then he ate his supper quickly, and lay down on the sleeping platform. Alexandra did the housework, and was also busy in the collective farm vegetable garden. Morning frosts had started early in the season, and there were chilly dews—almost hoar-frost.

The harvest was in full swing, and machines were whirring in the fields. In the vegetable gardens they were harvesting onions. There was a good crop, and the whole team worked for three days pulling them up and preparing them for the winter. Alexandra came home with her hands red from onion skins, while Lyubka's were yellowish green from the flax which she had been heckling and binding in the flax team, along with her former girl friends.

Konstantin had been working until he could hardly stand. But every day, about two o'clock, he would come out to his favourite place by the hayrick, which was always built in the same spot, year after year; and there he would lie down, staring at the sky; or sit, leaning with his back against the hayrick, looking at the stream and the forest, and thinking. It seemed as if he were living through his life again, with every important moment recalled, and sometimes even trifling details.

He remembered how he had started courting Lyubka. He was twelve years older than she, and she and her girl friends were always surrounded by lads of their own age. He imitated these lads, inwardly ashamed, and feeling awkward as if he couldn't do the right thing. All the same, he smoked Russian cigarettes as they did, used the same slang expressions, and even gave up his favourite kneeboots and took to wearing shoes.

He remembered how he used to wait for her at night by her porch, crawling under the windows through the dewy bushes while twigs crackled underfoot. How awkwardly he had put his arms round her warm shoulders from behind. How ready he had been to rush to her defence with all his mighty strength. But alas, nobody attacked Lyubka; his protection was not needed.

He remembered their wedding. The floors had been scrubbed and hearth-stoned, and they were soon covered with heelmarks from kneeboots, slippers, shoes. There was a rich smell of home-brew and the pungent smell of coarse tobacco. And the gay chorus of voices singing to an accordion, and Lyubka's

lips on his, and something white whirling in a circle, and shouts of 'Here comes the bride! Eh, what a beauty! Come on now, come on!'

He remembered a great deal more, too, as clearly as if it were all taking place now, before his eyes, right up to this very day.

* * *

SUDDENLY it no longer mattered whether Lyubka had laughed about him with Stepan, whether she was gossiping about him now with her friends in the flax team, or in general whether people in the village were talking about them or not. He didn't care any more.

As he sat there under the haystack, looking now at the stream familiar to him since childhood, and the distant forest where yellow leaves were already flashing on some of the trees, and now at the sky, still summery blue but with a hint of approaching autumn, Konstantin felt that his life was becoming clear, and that truth, injury and justice had fallen into their proper places. And despite his bitterness of spirit, and though he felt no relief at the realisation, he now knew what he had to do.

He returned home earlier than usual that day. A strong wind had been blowing since midday, driving the clouds and drying the earth and the leaves of the trees. The sun came out, although evening was approaching. He could hear from the top field the clatter of tractors and harvesters.

As he came near the house Konstantin heard Lyubka and Alexandra quarrelling. He didn't know whether they had quarrelled before, but he didn't think so. Today, evidently, silence had become intolerable, and they were shouting at each other. Lyubka's voice was loud and shrill, Alexandra's lower pitched but equally intense. They were going at it hammer and tongs, putting into their words all the resentment they felt towards each other and had so far suppressed.

'You're a fine one to reproach me with that', Lyubka was shouting, as Konstantin reached the porch. 'You're a fine one, I must say! I didn't get a baby before I was married. I don't hang round the necks of married men. I found myself a husband! Sure, I just sat and waited for some fellow to come along and pick me out.'

'Well, you waited! So what?' shouted Alexandra, raising her voice nearly as high as Lyubka's, so unexpectedly and with such anguish in her tone that Konstantin started. 'And what am I supposed to do now? Sit and wait all alone for the rest of my life?'

Konstantin swung open the door noisily and went in, interrupting the quarrel, which had been growing more and more heated. Alexandra and Lyubka stopped suddenly. Without looking at either of them he helped himself to his dinner, sat down at the table and began to eat. Alexandra remained standing against the wall, looking at the floor. Lyubka sat on the bench with her head averted, staring out of the window.

When he had finished eating Konstantin rose from the table and went over to Lyubka.

'Get your things', he said briefly. She hesitated a moment, but then began to collect her belongings. As soon as she had packed her bag they went out—Konstantin leading and Lyubka following behind. The sun was at their backs and its rays shone level over the forest. The wind, bending the alders along the river, blew from the west.

When they reached the three birches, Konstantin looked back for a moment. Lyubka was coming along behind him, while the figure of Alexandra still stood by the house. Lyubka walked steadily without turning round.

There had been a birch grove here at some time, but now all that was left were stumps and these three birch trees.

From his pocket Konstantin took a packet wrapped in newspaper. Lyubka had turned towards him, and he held out the packet, looking past her.

‘Here’s some money’, he said. ‘Now go.’

‘So you’re sending me away, is that it?’ observed Lyubka, half questioning half affirming.

Konstantin said nothing.

Suddenly, with a quick, impulsive movement, Lyubka came close to him—not touching him, but so near that he caught the smell of her hair, her skin, the memory of which had been buried somewhere in the past, but not forgotten, never forgotten.

‘Kostya, don’t send me away’, she said, in the same tone as before; then she began to whisper eagerly and hastily, ‘Let’s start again. It will be different this time. Send her away, Kostya. You don’t love her—I’m certain of that. She’s old—I can see. Besides, I’m your lawful wedded wife, you can’t get away from that. And what is she to you? Let her go, as she came.’

She stopped and waited. Konstantin said dully, ‘No, I won’t do that. She’s a human being, after all. You don’t care a damn for anybody.’

He was silent for a moment, then he spoke again: ‘Get moving.’

‘And suppose I don’t go?’ asked Lyubka defiantly, half closing her beautiful eyes. ‘What if I won’t go, eh? What’ll you do then?’

‘Then—I’ll kill you’, answered Konstantin calmly. He wanted to add: ‘And then I’ll kill myself, too’, but he said nothing.

Lyubka looked into his eyes, but he kept his gaze on hers. His eyes were grey, and how well Lyubka knew them. But now his gaze was remote. She realised that he meant what he said.

‘Oh, go to the devil!’ she exclaimed, and shouldered the bag containing her few belongings. ‘Stay there, then, in your old den, along of that old witch.’

She turned, and began to walk away with a light, even step towards the village. The wind blew her along, and the setting sun shone on her blue printed cotton dress so that it gleamed like rich silk.

Konstantin sat down on a stump and hung his head, but watching Lyubka from under his brows. He felt sure that when she reached the fir grove she must turn round and look back at him. But she didn’t turn round. She disappeared behind the fir trees, though now and again he still caught a glimpse of her blue dress through the gaps between them.

Then Konstantin raised his head and, looking up at the sky, he began to howl, softly. He had not wept since his childhood, and he could not weep now. But he howled, the way famished wolves howl in the freezing fields on bitter February nights.

After a while he stood up and looked towards the fir grove. There were plenty of gaps between the trees, but now there was no sign of a blue dress flashing among them.

He turned round and began to walk home. His tall, powerful body thrust aside the strong wind that blew against him.

And it was as well that the bear that used to wander about there looking for fermented oats did not cross his path that day, because it would have been the worse for the bear if he had met Konstantin as he made his way home.

—From *Ogonyok*. Translated by Vivien Pixner.

Surveys and Reviews

THE SOVIET LITERARY TRADITION

David Craig

FOR years poetry and fiction from the USSR have been thrown straightaway into the bear-pit of cold war polemic and abuse, as though they did not qualify for mature consideration like literature from anywhere else but were interesting only as pointers to some change or other in Party policy, or perhaps as succeeding (in a limited way, of course) in the teeth of an utterly adverse culture. A recent book by Helen Muchnic* does something to make good this shortcoming. She has read widely and has allowed Soviet literature to impinge on her own sensibility and taste. Her book is full of valuable literary history, e.g. the pages paraphrasing *Vekhi* (*Landmarks*)—the manifesto of the intellectuals disillusioned by the setback of 1905—and the detailed *résumé* of Mayakovsky's writing life.

As a critic she tends to shower the subject with descriptive formulations, as though in the hope that some will hit the mark: the gem is perhaps the comment that Mayakovsky's work 'seems the poetry of a nihilist Beethoven'. She is rather prone to the Higher American Mystification, especially on Pasternak, whom she idolises (pp. 396-7):

'Their exquisite music has no reference beyond itself; it is the self-contained design of sound, formed with the assurance of absolute pitch and expressing a devotion to art so complete that all life is seen through it. . . . A demand for "absolute pitch" sets standards beyond the self; it postulates an abstract and superhuman law as legislator in the realm of art, a rule of excellence not made by man, a gift of grace.'

To me the constant disappointment of Pasternak's poems (if the translations can be gone on at all) is that so few get beyond a web of purely æsthetic (though wonderfully perceived) likenesses between ourselves and nature or one natural thing and another. The same applies to the coincidences in *Doctor Zhivago*, which strike me as a breakdown in the realism of the novel. Dr. Muchnic dreams up an exalted metaphysic of correspondences to justify all this, but as she is apt to hover in the air above the prose and poetry rather than reach conclusions via analysis of the texts themselves, it is hard either to agree or to disagree with many of her points.

The Gorky chapter shows her ability to make the basic discriminations. Gorky's weaknesses—which she deals with at great length—are fairly defined (p. 88):

' . . . life seems to oscillate between the poles of violence and philosophising. . . . With all the "philosophising" in his work, there is, however, little philosophy in it. His was not a speculative mind, and the arguments that fill his pages, unlike the great debates in Tolstoy's and Dostoevsky's novels, are neither spontaneous, nor intense, nor personal . . . '

This precisely judges the lumpishly undigested quality of almost all Gorky's novels (though not *The Artamonovs*). By contrast Georg Lukács, in *Studies in European Realism*, seems unaware of the failure of *Foma Gordeyev* and the rest.

* Helen Muchnic, *From Gorky to Pasternak* (Methuen, 430pp., 50/-).

But neither could Dr. Muchnic (who is an æstheté rather than a humanist) have come near the noble account of Gorky's strength that closes Lukàc's book:

'Gorky's art knows nothing of the modern false extreme of an "intimate" art on the one pole and a pseudo-monumentality divorced from reality on the other. . . . He has a wise heart and hence wise senses. . . . And because everything he sees and forms is humanly momentous, he can present seemingly uninteresting scenes of everyday life without losing his true monumentality and becoming "intimate"; he can depict the coarsest things in men in all their blatancy without so much as a shadow of modern grossness falling on his writing. . . .'

Dr. Muchnic would surely have been juster if she had come at Gorky more through his best works—the early non-romantic stories, *The Artamonovs*, the diaries, reminiscences and autobiographies which are virtually creative and which she little more than paraphrases. But in western criticism there is a built-in inability to be just to Soviet literature. Hayward and Labedz's contributors* make it easy for themselves to present Soviet literature as a sorry tale of decrees and suppressions by the simple tactic of spending the least time on the best works, the classics of the period. Fedin's trilogy, Tvardovsky's *Vasili Tyorkin* are glanced at in a sentence; there is not one substantial quotation from a novel or poem until p. 131. Dr. Muchnic's main point against *The Quiet Don* is that Sholokhov gives an indulgent picture of an unpleasant hero—the Communist Mishka—and allows his values to determine the book. Yet she quotes not one passage from his scenes: they would have shown, I believe, that Sholokhov is noticeably un-glib and restrained with Mishka, not a touch of false heroism, as though to show that the character's hardness is that of a grim epoch and not something to be easily exultant about.

Literature and Revolution is in fact a history of literary control and censorship in the USSR. The first effort to plan constructively the growth of a literary culture should indeed be studied again and again. The contributors' viewpoint is uniformly hostile, and for periods of years (especially 1932-41 and 1946-53) there is enough in the record to appal any humane man. More writers were killed than I had realised. Inexcusable excesses (from the imprisonment of writers for differences of political or artistic opinion to the cutting out of passages from western works issued in translation) occurred as a matter of course. Those who were unscathed physically were beset by personal and artistic handicaps: 'of the many sores that plagued him one of the worst, undoubtedly, was the complete lack of any feeling of security' (Walter Vickery, 'Zhdanovism', p. 114). 'The evocation of Vladimir Ilyich [in Soviet poetry] always engenders swank, emphasis, bombast, the grandiloquent pose, tricks—everything that Lenin himself liked least' (Pierre Forgue, 'The Young Poets', p. 180).

You would not, however, guess from this book that the same period saw the development of an outstanding literature of modern realism—at a time when so much creative effort in the West spent itself in sterile and often perverted experimentation—or that a public was being educated to the best in the arts in a way not possible under 'free enterprise' conditions. The book is biased partly via plain loading of the evidence. Any Soviet writer who killed himself becomes an accusation against the régime—is the literary history of the West ever framed to charge capitalism with the suicide of three of our front-rank novelists in the last twenty-three years (L. H. Myers, Virginia Woolf, Hemingway)? A deeper bias lies in the inability of the contributors even to conceive of the different frame of mind that grows up in a society aiming to free the

* Max Hayward and Leopold Labedz (Eds.), *Literature and Revolution in Soviet Russia, 1917-1962* (OUP, 235pp. 25/-).

powers of the mass of the people, to cater for them instead of favouring the 'élite' and letting the rest of us scrounge the crumbs. That aim has been the force underlying socialist realism, described by Lukács as the literature which shows 'the forces working towards socialism *from the inside*. . . . [It] is concerned to locate those qualities which make for the creation of a new social order'.* This has in fact become the creative aim of major writers. Fedin has said of his development from the twenties to his trilogy of the forties and after:

'So long as I, a writer of the older generation, felt that *someone* thought it necessary that I portray a new character, this new character appeared to have been cut out of paper: he consisted of two surfaces, and nothing more. What was important was not that *someone* needed that I portray a new hero, but that the portrayal of a new hero became *my own personal need*.

' . . . I understood that I could portray life's truth only when I had seen the new hero from within, spiritually. I understood that I had to become one with him, just as the great realists taught us to become fused with their heroes, to be on their side (speaking of him as "I").'

By contrast Helen Muchnic in her contribution on 'Literature in the NEP Period' cannot see socialist realism as anything more than a paltry rationalisation of the régime's bad taste—'a threatening philistinism, which was soon to find embodiment in the official doctrine of Socialist Realism' (p. 42).

George Gibian, contributor on the Thaw literature, who with Pierre Forgues and Ernest Simmons seems to me alone among the team in proceeding with the open sensitivity of a *critic*, does take pains to weigh his own viewpoint for relevance and soundness (p. 149):

'Am I judging Soviet literature by "culture-bound" criteria? Have I been taking Salinger, Hemingway, Butor or Beckett (or Proust and Mann) as standards and judging every degree of the arc of deviation from their norm to be an aberration? To some extent I plead guilty.'

It is also Gibian alone who offers an explanation (other than decrees and suppressions) for the comparative homogeneity of Soviet literature: 'the determination of the writers to be understood by a wide and to some extent unsophisticated' public, and their 'agreement about the nature of reality . . . as being solid, material, knowable' (p. 143).

It is true that a simple materialism cannot do justice to all of human experience or, as a basis for literary method, take in the range of behaviour and layers of feeling which literature must have as its province. But there is another extreme, to which most of the Hayward and Labedz team are unconsciously prone: the belief that what matters most in modern art is 'innovation', that 'art depends entirely on highly individual skills' and should deal in the 'less admirable but more interesting sides of human nature' (pp. 139, 142; vii; 119). Of the two arts, western and socialist—in so far as they are distinct—I believe it is the socialist which has the greater potential as a lasting inspiration to mankind

* Georg Lukács, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism* (1963), pp. 92-3.

ETHEL VOYNICH CENTENARY

Andrew Rothstein

It is not often that the centenaries of a father and daughter are celebrated in one year. 1964 was the hundredth anniversary of the great English mathematician George Bowle, whose algebra underlies so much in cybernetics and is now a must for thousands of student teachers, and of the birth of his daughter Lilian, the writer Ethel Voynich. Bowle was largely unhonoured in his own times, and in her own country so was his daughter. Bowle's centenary has been modestly remembered in scientific circles, Lilian's extensively in the USSR.

TWO years ago readers of ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL were given an account of Eugenia Taratuta's remarkable piece of research on Ethel Voynich, author of *The Gadfly* (ASJ, summer 1962).* Mrs. Taratuta's work, printed in 10,000 copies in 1960, came out in a second and enlarged edition in April 1964, this time in 20,000 copies, in preparation for the celebration of the centenary of the birth of Ethel Voynich on May 11, 1964. A special edition of *The Gadfly* appeared in 150,000 copies (in Russian), and an edition in English in October, 1964 (10,700 copies). The following is an account of the celebrations, received in a private letter.

* * *

EVERY newspaper printed a commemorative article, some quite substantial. On the anniversary itself Mme Taratuta spoke on the radio and appeared on television. There were several other radio features about Voynich.

Schools, clubs and public libraries organised "Voynich evenings" in Moscow, Leningrad, Voronezh, Tambov, Leninabad, Riga and other large cities, and in many villages as well. A small filmstrip on Ethel Voynich, a record of Shostakovich's music for the film *The Gadfly*, and the film itself were used for these evenings.

I attended the event at one Moscow school. The children had learned passages from *The Gadfly* in English, read poems by Shevchenko in Voynich's English translation, and described her life in English.

The Stanislavsky-Nemirovich Danchenko Theatre in Moscow put on the opera based on her novel.

About 700 were present at a ceremonial celebration held at the Writers' Union, jointly organised by them and by the USSR-Great Britain Society. A representative of the British Embassy attended. Boris Polevoi was in the chair. After a short opening address by Mme Taratuta, a number of people spoke who had seen Ethel Voynich in New York between 1955—when a Soviet member of the United Nations staff and his wife and daughter were her first visitors from the USSR—and her death in 1960 at the age of ninety-six. Among them were the journalist Poltoratsky, the artist Goryaiev, the former Deputy Minister for Education Dubrovina, film cameraman Akhuratov, Ira Borisova, who as a seven-year-old girl was with her parents when they came to the novelist's flat in 1955, and the composer Spadavecchia, author of the opera. Then extracts

* We must apologise that in that article we inadvertently, through bad transliteration from Russian, gave Ethel Voynich's maiden name as Lilian Bull, instead of Lilian Bowle, thus doing less than justice to a memory we meant to honour.—Editor.

from the documentary film made in Voynich's flat in May 1959 were shown, and scenes from the opera performed. An artist of the Moscow Philharmonia read scenes from the novel.

'In the evening there was an exhibition in the foyer of material collected by Eugenia Taratuta—more than 100 editions of *The Gadfly* in various languages, her other books with her autographs, her letters and music, photographs, many posters and pictures of performances of *The Gadfly* as a play, photographs of her friends, books on her work. Some of these materials were also shown on television.

'Maxim Gorky's 85-year-old widow was present.'

* * *

UP to May 1963 there had been 119 editions of *The Gadfly* in the Soviet Union, totalling more than 3,000,000 copies in twenty-three languages. Two volumes of her selected works appeared in July 1958 in 150,000 copies, and the edition was reprinted in April 1960 and again in 1963.

CORNUCOPIA OF CLASSICS

Poor Liza. N. M. Karamzin. (75pp. 6/-.)
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Mumu. I. S. Turgenev. (112pp. 6/6.)
The Thunderstorm. A. N. Ostrovsky. (148pp. 7/6.)
Red-nosed Frost. N. A. Nekrasov. (144pp. 7/6.)
Six Stories. A. P. Chekhov. (75pp. 6/-.)
The Wedding. A. P. Chekhov. (68pp. 6/-.)
Uncle Vanya. A. P. Chekhov. (142pp. 7/6.)

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The present batch ranges chronologically from Karamzin's *Poor Liza* (1792) to Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, first published in 1897. They progress in literary 'difficulty' from the selection of Chekhov's stories to the kaleidoscopic *collage* of Nekrasov's poem.

The solemnly lyrical prose of Karamzin's *povest* is introduced by W. Harrison, of Durham University, and his remarks on the late-eighteenth-century cult of 'sensibility' are extremely helpful in placing this sentimental idyll in its literary perspective. Karamzin reaches out to Europe from the vast dark hinterland of pre-Pushkin Russian literature, and this edition of *Poor Liza* is a valuable introduction to the author and his times.

The volume of six short stories of Chekhov would make admirable reading for the pre-O-level year. They are not linguistically over-demanding, and they are very representative of the mind of Chekhov in all its warm humanity through cold objectivity as manifested in his larger dramatic works and more important short stories. The stories here are introduced and annotated by Professor Gorodetsky, of Liverpool. The *Uncle Vanya* of this series is appearing for its second (revised) edition by J. M. C. Davidson, who previously also edited *Three Sisters* for Bradda. The short one-act play *The Wedding* is edited by A. B. Murphy, of University College, Swansea, with notes and short introduction and the quite unexpected added charm of three wonderful photographs relating to the history of the play and a diagram of sails and rigging, labelled in the vernacular, to accompany and somewhat elucidate the nautical carryings-on of Captain Revunov.

Pushkin's well-known *Queen of Spades* is introduced and annotated by J. Forsyth, of Glasgow University, and the reader is thoughtfully provided with a note on the game of faro and a diagram of the fateful

hands of cards in Hermann's three games. The edition of Turgenev's *Mumu* is given a comprehensive introduction, as is *Red-nosed Frost*, another perennially potential A-level text. For the latter the editor sets out a very useful and necessary chronology of the contents of Part I of the poem. This will be a great help to students who might find Nekrasov's very 'modern' method disconcerting.

With Ostrovsky's *Thunderstorm* we are possibly in post-A-level territory. This very moving microcosmography of darkest middle-class nineteenth-century Russia, still powerfully in the repertory of the Maly Theatre and clashing with its discords in Janacek's offshoot *Katya Kabanova*, is not a uniformly easy text. Here the play is largely left to speak for itself with the minimum of comment from its American editor, whose 'afterword', however, is sufficient as a first commentary and to provide material for further discussion.

Each of these books is provided with a very full vocabulary section and a stressed text, and the production is faultless. These volumes are a pleasure to read, to look at, to handle, to buy and to own.

W. S. BAILEY.

ANGLO-RUSSIAN SCIENCE LINKS

From the *History of English-Russian Scientific Links*. M. I. Radovsky. (Academy of Sciences, Moscow. Unpriced.)

WHILE by no means a comprehensive study, as the author himself remarks, M. I. Radovsky's book *From the History of English-Russian Scientific Links* ranges from the sixteenth century, when British merchants were searching for a north-east passage to India and China, to the nineteenth century, when British scientists attempted to send an expedition to explore the North Pole. They tried to convince the British government of the importance of the expedition by turning to the Russian Academy of Science for its support. The support was given by the Russian scientists, but the British government remained unconvinced, and the plan was not realised at that time.

The author deals with two famous scientists—one English: Newton; and one Russian: Mendeleev. There is a long, detailed chapter on Newton and his influence on Russian scientific literature. Special emphasis is laid on the work of popularisation by two Soviet scientists, A. N. Krylov and S. I. Vavilov. In 1934 the former gave a lecture in the Institute of the History of Science and Technology on *Newton's Theory of Astronomical Refraction*. The author claims that this was the first time the essence of this forgotten work was developed. Nineteen forty-three saw the 300th anniversary of

the birth of Newton. Despite the war, meetings were organised all over the Soviet Union, and many leading Soviet scientists took part in the celebrations. The Royal Society, as an acknowledgment of the honour the Russians had paid to Newton, sent the Soviet Academy of Sciences an original draft of a letter from Newton to Count Menshikoff, acquainting him of his election to the Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1714.

Mendeleev's work was very well known in England during his lifetime and he was accordingly honoured. He visited England several times—in 1889 he gave a very successful lecture at the Royal Institute and in 1894 he received an honorary doctorate from both Oxford and Cambridge Universities. The author quotes from the diary of Mendeleev's wife, who says he found the university ceremonies extremely tedious.

One chapter in the book deals with the practical scientific contacts of the time of Peter the Great, when many Englishmen and Scotsmen went over to Russia to work. There is a chapter on contacts with the Royal Society, and another on the work of Russian scientists in the British Association. This latter deals mainly with the field of electricity and magnetism in the nineteenth century. At this time the Russian scientist Jacobi was working on the practical application of these sciences. He tried to harness electric power to drive a boat and he used electrolysis to reproduce copper engravings. He was in constant touch with Faraday, and in 1840 came to England to deliver a lecture to the British Association. There is also one short chapter on the attempts of both Russian and British scientists to persuade their governments to adopt the metric system of weights and measures—both failed!

SARAH WHITE.

NEW LIGHT ON RUSSIAN HISTORY

Ocherki istorii istoricheskoi nauki v SSSR. (Sketches of the History of Historical Science in the USSR.) Vol. 3. Ed. M. V. Nechkin and others. (Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1963. 830pp. 2R66K.)

THE third volume of this collective history of historical studies in Russia deals with the period from the mid-1890's up to 1917, the period of imperialism. The first section (pp. 9-236) is concerned with the developing historical conceptions of the pre-revolutionary Russian Marxists. Lenin naturally gets the lion's share. But there is a valuable chapter on the contribution to world history and Russian history made by the other legal and illegal Bolshevik literature of the period. Most of this material is completely unknown out-

side the Soviet Union. A third chapter gives a balanced and sympathetic account of the work of the Marxist historian M. N. Pokrovskii (1868-1932), whose views had been rejected as unsound during Stalin's ascendancy.

The remainder of the book deals with 'The crisis of bourgeois historical science in the period of imperialism'. It is arranged in a series of chapters covering everything from the history of the ancient east to such auxiliary disciplines as palaeography and numismatics. The general picture is of a generation of historians who either adopt reactionary and anti-historical political positions—agnosticism, cyclical theories, modernisation of the past—or lose themselves in antiquarian detail without any attempt at synthesis. But there is no denigration of the positive contributions made by these scholars, even by those among them who later became the bitterest enemies of the young Soviet state, and there is no name-calling. And one point which emerges again and again is that even the most 'official' of historians were forced by their interest in social and economic history to ask many of the same questions as their Marxist colleagues, even though they often gave unsatisfactory answers, or no answer at all. A good example is provided by K. N. Uspenskii (1874-1917), whose approach to medieval history is admirably analysed by Z. V. Udal'tsova on pages 515-526.

Detailed criticism of most of the chapters exceeds the present reviewer's competence. In those on the history of the ancient world and on Byzantine history there is a certain one-sidedness due to a too narrow definition of history. Thus, although M. V. Rostovtsev's early work, before he left Russia, gets several pages, B. V. Farmakovskii, who did more than any man of his generation to develop the study of the history of the Greek cities of the Black Sea coast, is awkwardly tucked away in a scrappy chapter on archaeology. And N. P. Kondakov, a scholar worthy to stand beside Vasil'evskii and Uspenskii, is hardly mentioned in the otherwise excellent chapter on Byzantine history, presumably because his main field, and the starting-point of his often wide-ranging studies, was the history of Byzantine art.

Russian scholarship in general, and Russian historiography in particular, was unjustly neglected in a generation dominated by German intellectual leadership. The specialist in any field will find in the rich bibliographical notes to this book references to work after work which still retains its value. Again and again he will find Russian scholars of the beginning of the century anticipating views later defended successfully by historians writing in English, French or German, and making constructively critical appreciations of the

work of their western contemporaries. Whether he will be able to obtain the works referred to is another question. A sample check in the British Museum library, which is relatively rich in pre-1917 Russian books, showed that rather more than half of the books sought were unobtainable.

There are forty-five pages of bibliography and a full index of authors.

ROBERT BROWNING.

SCI-FIC WITH A DIFFERENCE

Russian Science Fiction. Ed. Robert Magidoff, trs. Doris Johnson. (Allen and Unwin. 272pp. 25/-.)

I FOUND this a most disappointing volume. The keynote was boredom due to the complete absence of what a former editor of mine called 'compulsive writing'.

I do not read science fiction for the science; I read it for the fiction. That is why many publishers do not advertise their science fiction publications as such; they appear in the general fiction list. There they succeed or fail dependant on the author's writing.

The editor in his introduction states his difficulties in obtaining original contributions. He explains that short stories appear in publications not readily available outside the USSR: 'the compiler is thus left largely to the mercies of chance and of the Soviet bureaucrats who decide what may, and what may not, be exported from the USSR.' I commend him to Jacques Berger's excellent collection of Soviet science fiction published by Feltrinelli Editore, *Fanta Scienza Russa*. He seems to have overcome successfully the limitations that worried Magidoff.

There are stories in this collection by, of course, Ivan Yefremov and by Vladimir Dudintsev. Of historic interest is the text of K. Tsiolkovsky's 'On the Moon'. I do not see why this should have been included here. It is already available.

But this book does indicate that the distinction between science fiction and science does not seem to be very sharp in the USSR. Recently there appeared in the publication *Zvezda* in Leningrad a science fiction story by G. S. Altov and Valentina Zhuravleva (one of whose stories appears in the Magidoff volume).

One of their short stories was picked up by the French press and treated as science fact. *Le Figaro* in particular gave it as front-page news, and caused the American *Time* magazine to start for the first time a science fiction column (see *Time*, April 3, 1964, p. 28), but this may be counted as 'western stupidity'.

It does stress, however, the differentness of Soviet science fiction.

MAURICE GOLDSMITH.

SIERRA SURVEY

Siberia: Its Conquest and Development.
Yuri Semyonov. (Hollis and Carter. 414pp.
with maps. 42/-.)

THIS interesting book is a translation of the German version published in Berlin in 1954. The author, now a lecturer in the Slavonic Institute of the University of Uppsala, left Russia at the Revolution after travelling widely in eastern regions.

The book, the result of much careful scholarship, is a straightforward chronological account, from the Mongol invasion of Europe in the twelfth century to the treaty between the Soviet Union and China in 1950. Adopting an easy conversational style, the author takes the reader through the eventful history of these 700 years, giving a wealth of names and events in Siberian history, casting brief glances at the Russian rulers and their policies and at the geography of Siberia.

The exploration of that vast territory was virtually completed by the middle of the seventeenth century. Using first the indefatigable Cossacks—generally dismounted and frequently pushing their way through unknown lands along the rivers by boat—merchant adventurers with royal approval and later with more official control financed exploration and subjugated the many native peoples. For centuries the incentive was wealth from furs; other resources were ignored. A constant succession of governors and officials supervised and mulcted the provinces but generally encouraged settlement. The impression that Siberia in the nineteenth century was colonised by deportees, a view held even in Russia, was quite false. By the end of the century no more than five per cent of the people were political prisoners. After a period of neglect, between 1800 and 1850 the new incentive for development came from the widespread discovery of gold and, incidentally, of a wealth of other resources, not fully exploited until after the revolution. The last chapters of the book are concerned with the incorporation in the Russian Empire of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska and the establishment of fortified trading ports along the American coast as far south as California. This phase of history terminated with the sale of Alaska to the USA in 1867—in part an attempt to cement relationships between Russia and the States against Britain. The book then goes on to record the troubled relations with Japan and China and the construction and consequences of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

In the course of the story interesting points emerge. Many know of the activities of Willoughby and Chancellor in Russia in the sixteenth century, but fewer that Samuel Bentham, brother of Jeremy, built

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ships in the Dnieper and explored part of Siberia, or that James Shields helped Baranov, that Russian empire builder on both sides of the Pacific, or that fifteen young Russian naval officers were seconded to the British Navy in 1793 and saw war service against revolutionary France.

The book is a straightforward, sensible descriptive history, probably well translated although such phrases as 'he did not stay put . . .' and 'the government felt like tearing its hair out . . .' hardly carry conviction in a serious work, and the mis-quoted phrase 'Tsar of all the Russians' still finds currency. It is a pity that the concluding chapters do not include the very important developments since 1950. The book contains seven useful maps eleven pictures of some relevance, an index of proper names, and a full bibliography mainly of non-Russian sources.

D. W. SHAVE.

THE OTHER SYSTEM

The Economics of the Soviet Bloc. Stanislaw Wellisz. (McGraw-Hill. 244pp. 54/-.)

Banking in the USSR. (State Bank of the USSR. Moscow. 188pp. 30/- Available from Central Books.)

HERE are two rather unexciting books about the exciting subject of economic policy and organisation in the Communist bloc.

Dr. Wellisz, of the University of Chicago, bases his study almost entirely on Polish writings and experience. In spite of the title, it contains almost no information about Czechoslovakia, Hungary or East Germany, and it makes hardly any use of Soviet sources in Russian—even Stalin is quoted from the Polish translation. In its content the book is below the normal standard now achieved by western students of 'Soviet-type economies'. On the other hand, the reader with little knowledge of eastern Europe may find that this book provides a clear, useful and informative general introduction to the mechanism of central planning and its problems: Dr. Wellisz gives full weight to the discussions which are now taking place about decentralising the system through the use of mathematical methods, though his account has been overtaken by the very strong backing now being given to the use of computer methods in the USSR.

Banking in the USSR reprints the lectures given by Soviet financial experts to an international banking summer school in Moscow in 1962. The uninformed reader will find in this book a useful description of Soviet banking organisation, as well as a great deal of rather irrelevant material about the Soviet economy in general. But the authors wrote very much to a Civil Service brief: their job was to report and

defend the present system, not to examine it analytically.

The Soviet economic press is packed with interesting discussions about the operation of the financial system. Should a standard rate of return on investments be expected by the banks? Should turnover tax be evened out over all goods instead of being charged mainly on consumer goods? How can the enormously complex accounting system be rationalised through the use of the computer? Nothing of all this appears in these lectures.

R. W. DAVIES.

PAVLOV PUPIL

Work and Brain. Pavlov's Teaching and Its Application to Problems of Scientific Organisation and of Work. Yuri Frolov. Trs. Xenia Danko. (FLPH, 230pp. illus., 8/6. Available from Central Books.)

YURI FROLOV is one of the small band of Pavlov's surviving pupils. He is also known as a populariser, and an earlier book of his was published in Russian in 1937 and translated into English in 1938. The date of the present one is not stated, but it appears to contain one of the author's previous publications. Certain Pavlovian concepts have been selected for their presumed relevance to problems of physical and mental work.

The core of Pavlov's work is, of course, fully scientific, and his results and conclusions have been verified repeatedly in his own and other laboratories. Although subsequent refinements in techniques call for a certain reappraisal of details, the main principles seem unchallengeable. But this does not apply to the many strata of derivative application of Pavlovian theory to the greatly more complex problems of psychology, psychiatry, medicine, teaching, and so on. Most of the so-called Pavlovian assertions in these fields are in reality poorly supported or entirely unsupported by scientific evidence. Some are highly speculative. Empirical data are often spuriously expressed in seemingly physiological terms and much of the reasoning is by analogy. Thus, Pavlov has studied the phenomena of excitation and inhibition, irradiation and concentration of nervous activity in relation to the simplest forms of conditioned reflexes in dogs. The findings are often transferred uncritically to the much more complex phenomena of human learning, memory, mental fatigue and psychiatric disease. Frolov's book is unfortunately of this kind.

Although some of the information presented in this book is nevertheless interesting and even stimulating, it is of a kind which has brought much discredit to Pavlov's work. It is hence difficult to see any useful purpose in this translation.

L. CROME.

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Printed in Great Britain by Letchworth Printers Ltd. (T.U.), Letchworth, Herts—G4039